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DEVELOPING, IMPLEMENTING, AND TESTING A TRAINING
PROGRAM FOR LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY IN SELECTED
CHURCHES OF THE COLUMBIA UNION CONFERENCE
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

A Project Report
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Kenneth B. Stout

April 1983

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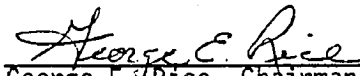
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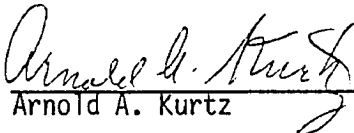
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DEDICATION

I would like to express deep gratitude and affection to my wife, Donna-Jean, and my children, Todd and Jody, for the numerous personal sacrifices they have made, and for their love, and encouragement through the many months of researching and writing for this project. Their strong support has been a major contribution to the completion of the project, and I, therefore, dedicate this report to them.

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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years I have had a strong interest in developing the talent and capability of the laity for meaningful service in the church. My pastoral experiences have increasingly impressed upon me the realization that the work of God on earth will never be carried out, as Christ wished, unless all of Christ's modern disciples discover, develop, and put to use their God-given talents. At the same time I have been frustrated by the lack of training provided for church members in most congregations, which lack perpetuates the non-participating posture of most members. Most pastors recognize that their professional training has not adequately prepared them for the work of lay training and development. Thus it has become increasingly clear that an understanding and philosophy of lay ministry is needed to develop pastors who possess the interest and skills to carry out a strong training program.

In the past seven years I have attempted to better understand lay ministry from a Biblical and practical standpoint by working with my own church members and students in various lay-training programs. Study toward the Doctor of Ministry degree has given me an opportunity to more deeply and systematically address the issue of lay training. I decided to focus on the development of several lay training programs, as part of the field project, in order to gain additional experience and become more effective as a trainer in both

a church and college setting. The work specifically chosen was the development of a program which would cultivate the pastor-teacher gift as found in the lives of key laymen.

There are five reasons why this seemed to be a good starting point for work as a lay trainer. First, I felt that this gift is vital to the successful operation of a local congregation. All congregations need key laymen who can provide strong pastoral leadership in support of the full-time pastor. Personal pastoral experiences have shown me that when there was a shortage of individuals functioning in a pastoral capacity, the churches did not operate efficiently and I was taxed beyond reasonable limits. At present, many pastors in various denominations are frustrated by the fact that they are unable to do all that needs to be done in ministering to the people under their charge.

Second, I believed that pastoral work implies a training responsibility in relation to other members. I was convinced that if laymen who possessed the pastoral gift could be trained for a successful ministry of their own, they might be able to assist the pastor in training other members of the church. The act of training lay pastors could set the stage for a general training emphasis in the church. In other words, lay pastoral ministry seemed the logical and best starting point to bring about a revival of lay training in connection with other gifts.

Third, I felt that God had called me and the church had equipped me to exercise the pastoral gift in my own life, and because of my training and experience as a full-time, professional pastor,

I had some expertise to offer those laymen wishing to develop their abilities as lay pastors.

Fourth, I came to believe that the New Testament presents a pattern of pastoral ministry which emphasizes the significance of and necessity for lay pastors to complement the work of full-time ministers of the gospel. If the divine pattern were taken more seriously, many congregations now struggling would be blessed with prosperity, dynamic growth, and effective shepherding.

Fifth, it appeared to me that little had been done to develop concrete and practical training programs specifically for laymen who might wish to serve as lay pastors in the Adventist Church. Thus, an effort to conduct such a training program might be helpful to the larger Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

The reader should sense the direction that has been taken in this report. It seemed that certain issues needed to be addressed before the actual training sessions were put together. First, the issue of prejudice against lay leadership had to be addressed. It was sensed that some leaders and members within the Christian church are hesitant to accept the idea of laymen doing "pastoral" work and serving as "lay ministers." Consequently, it seemed advisable to look at some of the reasons why this attitude might exist, and to try to understand whether or not these reasons are valid in the light of scripture. Chapter one reports the results of the study of this issue.

It was also felt that the issue of specially ordained leadership should be explored. To many, the fact that God has, in both

Old and New Testaments, supported a pattern of choosing selected individuals to provide leadership for His people, presents a significant problem in accepting the validity of "lay" leadership. What is the role of "specially appointed" leadership, and does it invalidate the concept of lay pastors? The second chapter records my investigation of this apparent paradox and gives my conclusions.

Next, it seemed essential to evaluate the legitimacy of lay pastoring in light of the history of the Early Church, and also in light of contemporary images and settings where the very word "pastor" has a limited connotation referring to the primary professional leader of a church. It was particularly important to address the issue of whether or not lay pastoral ministry could be accepted within the setting of the Adventist denomination. Chapter three reflects the findings on the legitimacy of lay pastors.

Finally, it seemed imperative that I wrestle with the specific idea of training, in connection with the concept of lay pastors, and answer questions such as, "What is the pattern after which lay pastors are to be trained?" "What is the role of the church in the training process?" "What do we mean by training?" and "How can lay training be carried out in a contemporary setting?" Chapter four reveals my answers to these questions.

After preparing to deal with these important issues, three seminar formats were developed that I felt would be responsive to the needs of prospective lay pastors, in light of the Biblical model found. Then churches within a suitable proximity were contacted. Two were responsive and consented to the training program.

Negotiations with these churches are described in chapter five. The reports on the actual experiences of the training seminars are found in chapter six. Chapter seven summarizes the report and discusses future plans for the training program.

CHAPTER I

OBSTACLES TO LAY MINISTRY

The Present Attitude

Tragically there has developed through the centuries of Christianity's existence an unfortunate dichotomy between the professionally trained, full-time, paid minister commonly called the "clergyman" and the rest of those who make up the body of Christ, presently called "laymen." This development has stymied the effectiveness of the corporate ministry of the church and negated the team spirit which motivated the early Christian church. Many laymen of the late twentieth century have developed the attitude that the "professional" minister is responsible for the operation of the church, and for the achievement of church goals and objectives. Ministers and laymen have largely come to view their tasks as being basically different from one another. Often a minister goes off in his direction, and church members go off in a completely different direction.

While laymen and clergy attend meetings together and participate in worship services together, most contacts are brief, and any substantial teamwork infrequent or non-existent. Laymen have not been valued and recognized as they should have been. Their talents have not been used as they might have been. Ministers have not seen

the participation of the laity on a wide scale and therefore have been left to bear a disproportionate share of the load within the church. The result has been a significant rift between those who view themselves as the "laity" and the "clergy."

The separation is real, as James Fenhagen suggests:

A gap between laymen and clergy exists when a member of the laity or a member of the clergy feels that his or her ministry is blocked or diminished by the ministry of the other.¹

Sometimes laymen have been responsible for the rift by failing to assume their rightful place and responsibilities in the church. Sometimes ministers have been responsible because they assumed lay leadership roles inappropriately or they came to view their tasks as unique and totally distinctive from the average member. It is easy to assign blame, and certainly each group has been guilty of heaping criticism on the other. Sometimes the criticism has been deserved. Fenhagen illustrates the way the war of words has gone when he says:

The clergy fault the laity for being unwilling to claim the ministries they have been given and preferring to look to the ordained person to do the ministry for them. The laity fault the clergy for being unwilling to give up control.²

Actually, ministers and laymen have both been at fault in allowing a chasm to be created between them. Instead of throwing stones at each other, it is time to humbly recognize the fact that there is a problem, and then to start looking, praying, and working for

¹James C. Fenhagen, Ministry in Solitude (New York: Seabury Press, 1981), p. 3.

²Ibid.

solutions! Healing can take place in the Christian church if laymen and clergy admit the problem and face it--together!

It is true that we have come a long way from the pre-Second World War II era when the idea of the "ministry of the laity" was almost unknown here in America.¹ Today the call for the laity to become involved and to participate substantially in the various areas of the church's life has risen almost to a fever pitch, yet change is coming about ever so slowly. Attitudes still have the "old bent." We have failed to discover the proper motivational keys which will elicit real change and dynamic action. There is much talk, but little accompanying change in relationships. It would appear to the researcher that the last twenty years in America has been characterized by the descriptive statement offered by Ayres:

The ministry of the laity is widely acclaimed . . . all have urged a development of the ministry of the laity. In the United States it has become a slogan of our time, one's enthusiasm for the concept a test of one's openness and mobility.

But . . . the layman remains a second-class citizen, an assistant to the clergy, primarily a maintenance man in the institutional church.²

In recent years there has been a growing conviction expressed by many church leaders that this division between laymen and clergymen must be approached with a renewed sense of urgency if Christianity is to speak to the present generation with power. Many would agree with the contemporary author, Fenhagen, who has said, "I am convinced that the greatest single obstacle to the genuine renewal of

¹Francis O. Ayres, The Ministry of the Laity (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962), p. 13.

²Ibid., p. 15.

the church is the lack of mutuality that exists between the clergy and the laity."¹

Certainly, Christ intended that His church be one in its work in the world, just as He was one with the Father during His own earthly ministry. Jesus prayed for His followers, ". . . that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me" (John 17:21).² But until this Biblical model of unity is achieved in relationships between the so-called clergy and laity, Christ's prayer will never be answered, and the Christian church will continue to experience frustration and trauma.

Traditional Terminology

There are certain words and titles, popularized through the centuries, which have tended to create stressful relationships between members of the church and greatly agitate the division between leaders and fellow members. They have been used to lend support to the development of hierarchical levels never intended by the early Christians or by Jesus Christ. This section looks at some of the most important of these traditionally misused terms in order to correctly understand their meanings, help defuse current tensions, and suggest new prospects of laymen and clergymen working together.

¹James C. Fenhagen, Toward a Mutual Ministry: New Vitality for the Local Church (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), p. 23.

²New American Standard Bible (Chicago: Moody Press, 1973). All scriptural references are from this translation unless otherwise indicated.

The Clergy

First, let us look at the word clergy. Today the term clergy has come to be synonymous with a distinct, separate, exalted group of leaders within the church who are primarily responsible for the operation and outreach of the church. They are seen as the informed and gifted elite as opposed to the ignorant and unqualified people who make up the vast majority of the church. They are seen as those who have a totally unique work and purpose. The American College Dictionary describes the clergy as, "The body of men ordained for ministration in the Christian Church, in distinction from the laity."¹ They are sharply distinguishable from the rest of the church family. Was this word "clergy" originally applied in the Bible in the manner it is today in popular usage? Was this term to represent a complete separation between those who do "ministrations in the Christian Church" and those who are part of the so-called laity, who are not able to perform services in the church?

Actually, the word "clergy" is derived from the Greek word κληρος.² Literally it means "lot." In the New Testament κληρος is used for the "portion allotted to someone."³ It was that which was given rather than won or earned by someone, and specifically that which was given by God Himself.⁴

¹"Clergy," (1964), p. 225.

²Gottfried Oosterwal, "The Role of the Laity," Andrews University Focus, Supplement #23, 9, no. 3 (July-August 1973):p. 3.

³Johannes Herrmann, "κληρος," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1972), 3:763.

⁴Ibid.

Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon notes the specific meanings of the word κληρος in several New Testament passages: Acts 1:17, 25 "assignment," "investiture;" Col 1:12 "allotment," "destination;" Acts 8:21 "a part," "portion," "sharing;" 1 Pet 5:3 "a constituent portion of the church;" Matt 27:53 "a thing used in determining chances," "a lot." κληρος can be understood to denote:

The heavenly gift which God has allotted to each called believer in fellowship with all the saints . . . as a present benefit which God apportions to each, thus giving him a share, his individual share, in that which is prepared for the community.

The word κληρος, then, was not to be used as a title or office for a particular official or group of leaders, thus separating them from the rest of the church constituency. Raoul Dederen supports this: "While it [κληρος] is used in I Peter with reference to the church as a portion allotted to the elders, it never means a church official as distinct from the body of believers."²

The clergy, then, is not an exalted group within the church, but is the incorporation of the entire church fellowship. It represents those people throughout the world who have received and accepted the inheritance of salvation and grace that is made possible in Jesus Christ.³ The possibility of being a candidate for the κληρος is open to every human being, for God is reaching out to grant an allotment of grace, and participation in the kingdom of God to every

¹Ibid., 3:764.

²Raoul Dederen, "A Theology of Ordination," Ministry 51, no. 2 (February 1978), Special Supplement, p. 24K-24P.

³Oosterwal, "The Role of the Laity," p. 3.

person on planet earth. The κληρος should not be used to drive a wedge between members of the body of Christ.

The Laity

We also need to look at the word laity. The term is derived from the Greek word λαος which is frequently translated "people." λαος usually refers to God's people in a corporate sense as is evident by the fact that it usually appears in the singular form.¹ It would highlight those who have responded to the gospel call.

Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon translates its use in Matt 27:25 as a "body or concourse of people," or a "multitude;" and Matt 26:5 as the "common people;" in Matt 2:4, Luke 2:32, Titus 2:14 as "a people, or nation;" and ο λαος in Luke 2:10 as "the people of Israel."²

The New American Standard Bible translates λαος in the following manner in 1 Pet 2:9, 10: "But you are a chosen race . . . a people [λαος] for God's own possession, . . . for you once were not a people [λαος], but now you are the people [λαος] of God. . . ." Again in Acts 15:14, "Simeon has related how God first concerned Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people [λαον] for His name."

We are forced to conclude that when the Bible refers to the λαος it is denoting the whole body of Christians who have been salvaged from the world for salvation and service in God's kingdom. It represents the redeemed people who belong to God's kingdom of

¹Ibid., p. 2.

²p. 247.

light. It is a group, not an individual. The Bible never uses the term λαος to refer to a single man or woman. The Greek word for "layman" simply does not appear in the NT, apparently because God chooses to view the laity as the totality of His people.

It should be particularly noted that the Biblical word for laity is not used to contrast one group of believers within the church from another. That is, it was never used as a title for general church members to distinguish them from the church leaders or from professionally trained, full-time ministers. All of those in the New Testament church were considered part of the laity, because all were the people of God, all were on equal footing in terms of their basic privileges and responsibilities. Now we can say that the laity identifies a special group, but not a special group within the church! It is a special group in that it distinguishes those who are in the church from those outside the church. Again, never does it describe a second-class group of people within the church.¹

Many scholars conclude from a study of the Biblical usage of the words κληρος and λαος that the two words or terms refer to the same people not to two classes of people. Oscar Feucht puts it this way: "All Christians are God's laity [λαος] and all are God's clergy [κληρος]."² Hendrik Kraemer adds: "The two words klēros and laos appear in the New Testament but . . . they denote the same

¹Oosterwal, "The Role of the Laity," p. 3.

²Oscar E. Feucht, Everyone a Minister: A Guide to Churchmanship for Laity and Clergy (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1976), p. 58.

people, not different people."¹ Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton add their testimony: "It is literally correct, therefore, to say that all clergy of any type are part of the laity, the laos, the people of God."²

The changes that have taken place since the Biblical foundation was laid regarding the usages of words like κληρος and λαος are unfortunate and in need of being corrected in the present. It is not easy to bring about change, however, since some of these distortions of meaning have been with us for many centuries. Kraemer suggests, for example, that the seeds that led to the separation of the laity from the organized, ordained, and professionally trained clergy were sown as early as the end of the first century A.D.³ Clement of Rome in his letter to the Corinthians in A.D. 95 is said to have used the term λαϊκος (related to λαος) as referring to the ordinary membership of the church as opposed to the clergy. Despite the fact that, according to Morton and Gibbs, the church did not have a clergy as we think of it until the fourth century,⁴ the concept that Clement helped launch has come to wield a profound influence on the history of the church and has radically altered the way we view relationships within the church today. It is fascinating to see how ideas get started, and to follow them in terms of the impact they make or fail to make. In the case of the separation between the members of the

¹A Theology of the Laity (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), p. 52.

²God's Frozen People (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1965), p. 16.

³Kraemer, p. 50.

⁴p. 30.

church and their full-time leaders, the separation subtly and slowly took place over the centuries. Charles Neill and Hans-Ruedi Weber aptly describe the move toward separation: "A process of gradual differentiation took place between the clergy and the laity of the laos of God."¹ Especially during the Middle Ages the idea of separation was institutionalized with the exaltation of priests, bishops, cardinals, etc., within the Catholic Church.² The Reformation attacked this idea of separation and attempted to correct this errant direction of the church. Martin Luther suggested that the "Romanists" of his day were willfully widening the gap between clergy and laity. He said:

Perhaps they sought . . . to establish a seed-bed of unappeasable discord, through which clergy and laity were to be more widely separated than heaven and earth; yet this has proven to be unbelievably hurtful . . . the clergy claim to be superior to the Christian laity, who nevertheless, have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. The clergy can almost be said also to regard the laity as lower animals. . . . This is ³the point at which Christian fellowship perishes. . . .

Martin Luther, along with other Reformation leaders, did what he could to close the gap between the so-called "clergy" and the so-called "laity" by speaking out in favor of the "priesthood of all believers." He suggested that all members of the church were part of the "clergy" or priesthood by virtue of their baptism into the body of Christ and supported this with a quote from 1 Peter:

¹The Layman in Christian History (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), p. 29.

²Oosterwal, "The Role of the Laity," p. 2.

³John Dillenberger, Martin Luther (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1961), p. 345.

Thus it says in 1 Peter 2:(9), 'Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, and a priestly kingdom.' It follows that all of us who are Christian are also priests. . . .¹ We, who have been baptized, are all uniformly priests. . . .

This emphasis did tend to break down some of the barriers and help build a greater sense of comradery within the church. Some practices were apparently put away, the general membership was permitted to study the Bible for themselves, and organizational structures were rearranged so as to allow for greater participation of laymen in church government. Unfortunately, the remedial measures were either temporary or did not go far enough as is evident by the fact that most Protestant churches still maintain certain clergy/laity barriers in their ecclesiastical systems which reflect an unhealthy attitude about relationships among members.

Misunderstanding Christian Ministry

There is one additional term that needs to be discussed in this report because it has also been used in such a way as to separate the full-time, professionally trained worker of God from the rest of the body of believers. This is the term minister. In popular usage a minister is almost exclusively used to refer to someone who is in charge of unique religious activities and who is generally the pastor of a congregation. This word should not be used to divide the people of God, but rather to bring them together in such a way that all recognize that they have important responsibilities and acts of service to perform for the Master.

¹Ibid.

Strictly on the basis of the NT, one cannot use the term "minister" to establish an exclusive group within the church. The term is used most appropriately to refer to each individual Christian and his servant relationship to Jesus Christ. This is firmly established by looking at the way in which the Greek words from which it was translated are used in specific NT accounts.

The three primary words translated "minister" in English translations are *υπηρετης*, *διακονος*, and *λειτουργος*.

The primacy of these terms in translating the term 'minister' is widely recognized as the following quote shows, "In the N.T. several Greek words are translated 'minister,' three of which call for notice: (1) Hupēretēs . . . , (2) Leitourgos . . . , (3) Diakonos. . . ." ¹

There are three other terms translated "minister" in some English translations: *χορηγεω*, *διδωμι*, and *παρεχω*. However, they are translated by this term in only single instances, without sustaining the idea of a separate and exclusive ministry; *χορηγεω* in 2 Cor 9:10, *διδωμι* in Eph 4:29, and *παρεχω* in 1 Tim 1:4.

Coming back to the three major terms translated 'minister,' let us look at how they are to be understood in the NT. Does the way they are used denote the establishment of a select, separate group of church members in the early church?

¹George Johnston, "Minister," Dictionary of the Bible, rev. ed. (1963), pp. 661, 662.

Hupēretēs

The term ὑπηρέτης means "under-rower" in its original sense according to the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. It is not the act of rowing, however, that is emphasized but the fact that one performs tasks "according to directions . . . in a relationship of service to a superior."¹ It is rarely used in the NT, but when it occurs is always used in a general sense to indicate someone who is an "assistant to another as the instrument of his will."² Obviously the context must help apply this general idea to a specific function. Most commonly ὑπηρέτης identifies a member of a group of servants who are under an authority or host of authorities and are responsible to achieve certain goals laid before them.³

According to Johnston it is frequently used for "officer or guardsman" (Matt 5:25, John 18:3, etc.).⁴ In nearly every case (all except in Luke 1:2) the term is translated by the RSV as either "to assist," "to serve," or "servants."⁵ So the dominant idea seems to be that of "subordination" in relation to one's superior.⁶ Herschel Hobbs even goes so far as to say that, "Both hupēretēs and oikonomos carry the idea of slavery. . . ."⁷

¹Karl H. Rengstorf, "ὑπηρέτης," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1972), 8:533.

²Ibid., 8:539.

³Ibid., 8:540.

⁴Johnston, p. 661.

⁵Ibid., p. 662.

⁶"Minister," S.D.A. Bible Dictionary, rev. ed. (1979), p. 744.

⁷"The Pastoral Office," Baker's Dictionary of Practical Theology (1967), p. 294.

Paul used a derivative of this term to refer to himself and Apollos as subordinates of Christ in 1 Cor 4:1, "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants [υπηρετας] of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." In Acts 24:23 it is used to refer to the loving care and service offered by Paul's friends during his imprisonment: "And he [Felix] gave orders to the centurion for him to be kept in custody and yet have some freedom, and not to prevent any of his friends from ministering [υπηρετειν] to him." So the term is here properly applied to anyone participating in a subordinate role as a servant or helper and not necessarily a specialized full-time worker in the church. In terms of Christian service it refers to a person's subordinate and dependent relationship with Jesus Christ. A relationship each and every Christian must maintain (John 15:5). The word is clearly not used with the intention of exalting a particular group of workers above others in the church. Evidence simply does not support this. Every dedicated follower of Jesus Christ plays a subordinate role in relationship to Him; all are potentially υπηρεται!

Leitourgos

What about the word λειτουργος? In classical Greek it referred to someone who rendered a special service to the commonwealth, without any suggestion of a priestly ministry.¹ In other non-biblical usages it referred to those who performed manual labor

¹Johnston, p. 662.

and therefore simply meant "worker."¹ In a military sense it referred to those who "work on intrenchments (pioneers)."² Very rarely was it used in a sacral sense.³ It usually referred to a person who performed special public service at their own expense. So the idea of personal sacrifice and willing service seems inherent in the word. In the NT it is sometimes used of public officials who are performing a task on behalf of God, even if they do not necessarily recognize Him as their Superior, "For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants [λειτουργοι] of God . . ." (Rom 13:6). It is also used in describing Christ's special priestly ministry in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb 8:6). Paul used it to refer to his work as a "minister of Christ Jesus" in Rom 15:16, where he talks of his work as having priestly implications. "To be a minister [λειτουργον] of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God. . . ." There is no clear indication, however, that he refers here to anything other than the "priesthood" that all believers in Jesus Christ now enjoy as His emissaries. As 1 Pet 2:9 says,

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation.
A people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the
excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into
His marvelous light.

Paul was convicted that he should give special attention to the Gentiles, but every disciple of Christ is to "proclaim the excellencies" of Christ wherever there is an ignorance of it. We are

¹R. Meyer, "λειτουργος," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1967), 4:229.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 4:230.

servants to the public of the entire world; public servants who, in this respect, are to make personal sacrifices for the common good of the human family.

Now λειτουργος was quite commonly used in the Septuagint to refer to the ministry of the priests in the OT as they worked in the sanctuary in a very specialized sense. But it is not so used in the NT church as Bible scholars have readily admitted. Nowhere is it used to highlight a formal order or office of specially selected Christian workers in contrast to the larger church body. Notice this strong, clear testimony:

No N.T. writer, however, by his usage [of the term λειτουργος] ever suggests the discharge of special priestly functions on the part of an official Christian ministry. Either the reference is to the old Jewish ritual (Luke 1:23, Hebrews 9:21, 10:11), or the word is employed in a transformed sense (Romans 15:16, Philippians 2:17), or again, it is applied to a service of Christian charity (II Corinthians 9:12, with diakonia; Philippians 2:25, 30) or of prayer (Acts 13:2) from which ideas of priestly ritual seem to be absent.

As stated, λειτουργος is used in describing loving acts of personal welfare ministry and relief work. For example, in Phil 2:25 we read Paul's statement about his friend and assistant: "But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, who is also your messenger and minister [λειτουργον] to my need."

Paul recognizes that this friend of the Philippians has been a servant, aid, and assistant in his work of promulgating the gospel. He finds this term very capable of describing the individual ministry

¹Johnston, p. 662.

of this trusted companion, who, as far as we know, was a typical but dedicated member of the church. Again this type of ministry is not limited to a special group but to any sincere believer who loves the Lord.

In Rom 15:26, 27 we see the term applied to Gentile Christians who have made a contribution to the poor of the church in Jerusalem.

For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. Yes, they were pleased to do so, and they are indebted to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister [λειτουργησαι] to them also in material things. (See also 2 Cor 9:12.)

So all of the believers in Macedonia and Achaia have served as "ministers" to their fellow believers in Jerusalem. Again, this term λειτουργος comes through as applicable to all of the Christian disciples who sense their responsibility to serve their fellow man in sharing both the doctrines and love of Jesus.

Diakonos

Now we come to the third major word translated "minister"--διακονος. It is by far the Greek word most commonly translated this way. A form of it (διακονια) is used almost exclusively when an English NT talks about "ministry."

Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon translates διακονος as, "One who renders service to another; an attendant, servant, etc. . . ."¹ The SDA Bible Dictionary, revised, refers to it as,

¹Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 91.

"A servant, not as to standing in society, but as to activity, an attendant. . . ." ¹

This is a favorite word of the writers of the NT when talking about the Christian rendering loving services to God. Some feel that this word is emphasized because it stresses even more than other words the submission concept, and that it seems to place everyone on the same level of submission in spiritual service. This would be a shift from OT images of priestly ministry. Whereas in the OT there was an exalted priesthood of men as distinguished from the great host of God's people, Christ now assumes that exalted position of serving as priest and we are all to serve as fellow priests.

It is significant that diakonos and diakonia are found instead of the leitourgos group when the ideas of minister and ministry are to be expressed. This corresponds with the fact that the priesthood of a selected class has been superseded by Christ's as High Priest and by the universal priesthood of the Church, his Body (I Peter 2:9; Colossians 1:22; Ephesians 5:27). It corresponds also with the fact that a ministry of lowly and devoted service (which diakonia particularly implies, Luke 17:1 . . .) has replaced the old ministry of exclusive privilege and ritual performance. Diakonia is the distinctive Christian word for 'ministry,' and diakonos for 'minister' (Acts 1:17, 25; Romans 12:7; Colossians 1:7). ²

Now this term is used in a wide variety of ways in the NT. It most definitely was not used, however, to isolate one group of "leadership types" from the rest of the church family. It was rather used in such a way as to bring the body together in extending the ministry of Jesus Christ by having individual members become Christ's hands,

¹"Minister," p. 744.

²Johnston, p. 662.

feet, mouth and so on, until Christ was fleshed out in the contemporary and multiple ministry of the church.

Again *διακονος*, *διακονια*, and related verb forms are used in a wide variety of ways. For example, to describe the personal services rendered to Jesus by Mary and Martha:

But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him, and said, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving [*διακονειν*] alone?' (Luke 10:40)

Also to characterize the assistance given by Timothy and others to Paul, "And having sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself [Paul] stayed in Asia for a while" (Acts 19:22). *διακονος* is further used to characterize one who is a true disciple:

If any one serves [*διακονη*] Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant [*διακονος*] also be; if any one serves [*διακονη*] Me, the Father will honor him. (John 12:26)

Notice how Christ uses a derivative of *διακονος* to apply to his own work as a minister who submits His will to the Father's in meeting the needs of the human family, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served [*διακονηθηναι*] but to serve [*διακονησαι*] and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). It is also used to highlight the fact that if anyone is to be esteemed among Christ's people they must humbly serve the people, "And sitting down, He [Jesus] called the twelve and said to them, if any one wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant [*διακονος*] of all" (Mark 9:35).

Now because a variety of gifts were distributed to the

various members who made up the church, there were a variety of services that could be performed as *διακονία*. To be a minister meant that a person was gifted in some way in order to perform in a humble but significant way for the good of Christ's cause. *διακονία*, in its broad sense, then, referred to the work of each and every member of the church exercising their individual spiritual gifts and capacities for the good of the larger body. But it does not separate those who had gifts from those who have none. All have gifts, and all carry out ministry. "And each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving [*διακονοῦντες*] one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet 4:10). Notice also:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries [*διακονιών*] and the same Lord . . . but to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor 12:4, 5, 7)

There are a variety of works or functions carried out under the broad umbrella term of "ministry." As vs. 5 says, "there are varieties of ministries." There is the legitimate ministry of the "Word" (Acts 6:4), there is the ministry of gracious acts of "benevolence" (Acts 19:22), and the ministry of various other individual gifts such as "wisdom," "healing," and "faith" (1 Cor 12:8-10). But all of these ministries are unified so that there are no unhealthy divisions, "But now there are many members, but one body (1 Cor 12:20)." It would be proper to say, There are many ministries, but one Ministry! As the liver, heart, kidneys, and eyes are separate organs, yet they are brought to function as one organism.

No person with a particular gift should be treated as more essential than another, or as having a different basic purpose. All

gifts of the Spirit are to be brought together into a unity that permits Christ to be uplifted and the gospel persuasively and winsomely proclaimed.

And the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; or again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; . . . God has so composed the body, . . . that there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. (1 Cor 12:21, 22, 24, 25)

More is said about the varieties of service within the concept of *διακονία* in a later section, but for now let it be clear that ministry, especially *διακονία* ministry, is a ministry that describes the work of all of God's people whether specially recognized leaders or not, whether full-time, paid workers in the church or not. *λειτουργός* and *υπηρέτης* may also appropriately be used in a non-exclusive sense to apply to a ministry that is performed by all who legitimately claim Christ as their example and master. None of these terms are used in the NT to establish a spiritual elite within the church, or to acknowledge a few privileged and powerful individuals of authority.

The almost universal cry of the contemporary scholar, author, and student of scripture in these modern times, seems to be that every member of the church should be viewed as a minister and that these gospel terms we have noted should not restrict this view, but complement it. Notice these statements for example:

It is clear that ministry at first referred to all the services rendered by the Christian community, regardless of who rendered them. . . . It may certainly be argued from the

Biblical and first-century data that every Christian, in some appropriate way, was to exercise ministry, that is diakonia.

Paul and the other writers of the New Testament, and many in the Old . . . insist . . . explicitly, insistently, and incessantly that all men are ministers, equally important in the task that God has given to the church.²

. . . Too often the laity delegate their ministry to one man--the clergyman. This one-man show is deeply unbiblical . . . Christ does not grant special gifts only to men and women who are full-time, life-time employees of the church. All the people of God share in Christ's ministry in and to the world, on the front lines.³

Even in the Seventh-day Adventist Church there are those who, like Gottfried Oosterwal and Rex Edwards, are currently and ably rekindling the appeal that "all Christians share in the essential ministry of the church. . . ." ⁴

In Chapter II we explore this idea of a shared ministry in greater detail, as it deserves a fuller and broader treatment in light of the purpose of this project.

We have discovered, then, after examining history and the Biblical record that the way some terminology has been applied has helped sustain and widen some of the barriers that exist between certain groups in the church. It seems that this calls us to reject the false implications of these terms and to drastically modify their

¹Seward Hiltner, Ferment in the Ministry (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969), pp. 34, 35.

²Ayres, p. 27.

³Hans-Ruedi Weber, Salty Christians (New York: Seabury Press, 1967), p. 17.

⁴Rex Edwards, A New Frontier--Every Believer a Minister (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1979), p. 67.

usage in order for them to more accurately reflect God-desired relationships and attitudes among God's people, and to free the broad membership of the church for an active mutual ministry alongside the full-time workers in the church.

The True Nature of Christian Ministry

It seems obvious, however, that before we can understand the full implications of the suggestion that all of us should be carrying out ministry, we need to have a clearer picture of what ministry really is. Where do we turn to discover the true meaning and nature of Christian Ministry? Where can we discover more detail about it? We must turn to Jesus' life! We will never grasp what ministry is really about until we see it in the context of Jesus' life on earth.

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible supports this:

A consideration of the origin of the Christian ministry must of necessity begin with the intention and action of Jesus, since all ministries¹ of the Christian churches claim to be ministries of Christ.

The essential nature of Christian ministry has been determined for all time by the ministry of Jesus. All our thinking about ministry must flow from the supreme model. This means that we are not free to shape and mold the nature and function of ministry on our own; first and foremost should be the thought of imitating the Great Model. Only if we follow the pattern that he has clearly established can we say that we are truly doing Christian ministry.

Now Jesus' ministry fully identified with the servant concept

¹M. H. Shepherd, Jr., "Christian Ministry," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (1962), 3:386.

inherent in the word *διακονία*. He reflected a self-sacrificing spirit that demonstrated clearly that this serving was the great priority of his life and the heart of his mission. As he said in Matt 20:28, "the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve [*διακονῆσαι*], and to give His life a ransom for many." But how would we characterize Jesus' ministry beyond the idea of it being a serving, giving, self-sacrificing ministry? Can we be more specific about it? How can we enlarge on this picture of Jesus' ministry so that we succinctly and accurately lay it out and measure our own view of ministry by it?

I believe that one of the clearest statements about Jesus' ministry, if not the clearest, is found in Luke 4:18, 19. In this text Jesus verbalizes the focus, essence, and scope of his mission and, therefore, his ministry on earth. In this statement he quotes from Isa 61 as though it were His Father's commission for His earthly sojourn. Notice the words of the passage as they are unfolded, pregnant with meaning:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden, to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.

Now there are at least eight characteristics of Jesus' ministry that are sharply brought to light in this passage.

1. Jesus' ministry was Spirit-commissioned. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because he has anointed me . . ." (vs. 18).

2. Jesus' ministry was a preaching ministry. ". . . He has anointed Me to preach . . ." (vs. 18).

3. Jesus' ministry was gospel-centered. ". . . He has anointed me to preach the gospel . . ." (vs. 18).

4. Jesus' ministry included the poor. ". . . He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor" (vs. 18).

5. Jesus' ministry sounded release. ". . . He has anointed Me . . . to proclaim release to the captives . . ." (vs. 18).

6. Jesus' ministry offered restoration. ". . . He has anointed Me . . . to proclaim . . . recovery of sight to the blind . . ." (vs. 18).

7. Jesus' ministry freed from oppression. "He has anointed Me . . . to set free those who are downtrodden . . ." (vs. 18).

8. Jesus' ministry highlighted a time of God's favor. ". . . He has anointed Me . . . to proclaim the favorable year of the Lord" (vs. 19).

There are at least four other characteristics of his ministry that we can glean from various other scriptures. While this list is not necessarily all-inclusive, it reflects some of the major qualities associated with his ministry. The additional points are:

9. Jesus' ministry was sacrificial and costly. ". . . He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed" (Isa 53:5).

10. Jesus' ministry was a seeking ministry. "For the Son of Man has come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

11. Jesus' ministry was a reconciling ministry. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their

trespasses against them . . ." (2 Cor 5:19).

12. Jesus' ministry was a shepherd-like ministry. "I am the good shepherd; and I know My own and My own know Me" (John 10:14). This shepherd imagery covers many of the previously mentioned characteristics and brings to light a host of other "caring" acts Jesus performed during his earthly life. We explore this shepherd concept more fully in a later chapter.

All of these characteristics were elements in the total ministry of Jesus. Without any one of them, the picture of his ministry would be incomplete. In light of them we should be able to more fully identify with what is meant by Christian ministry.

Christian ministry clearly embraces a wide spectrum of services performed and attitudes held for the enrichment of others to the glory of God. It is this broad-based ministry that we are called to share in.

CHAPTER II

TOWARD UNITY IN MINISTRY

Mutual Ministry

This chapter further explores the concept that all Christian disciples are ministers, as suggested at the end of chapter I. It was proposed that everyone who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour is given the responsibility to minister in some way. This may not necessarily be in a full-time, paid, leadership capacity as we normally think today when talking about a minister, but in the broad sense of working as a servant, as Christ did, with the primary concern of saving mankind. It was also demonstrated that there is strong support for the idea of mutual ministry among contemporary scholars. Now we must build on this concept by setting forth further evidence in favor of it, and discussing some of its implications.

Four Supportive Texts

First, we look at four scriptural references that strengthen the position that all are responsible to carry out the ministry of Jesus. (1) Matt 28:18-20:

And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'

It is widely recognized that this command was made not only to the specially chosen eleven disciples who expressed loyalty to Christ after the resurrection, but to all of the believers of that time, and virtually to every follower of Christ down the stream of history.¹

This is clearly a call to spread the gospel, and, therefore, to extend the "ministry" He was performing. His ministry centered on proclaiming the gospel and highlighting the "acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:19) in the context of a "seeking" outreach (Luke 19:10). This assures that each of us as modern baptized believers of Jesus are participating in His ministry to the extent that we are responding to Christ's command to disciple the nations. Edwards sees this and focuses on the work of reconciliation as the central responsibility in this joint ministry of all believers: "All Christian ministry is basically one, it is a ministry of reconciliation . . . all Christians share in the essential ministry of the church. . . ." ² (2) 1 John 2:6 asks us to duplicate the life of Christ by following in his footsteps: ". . . the one who says he abides in Him [Jesus] ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."

This calls us to "minister" as Jesus ministered during his earthly walk through Palestine, if we claim an abiding relationship with Him, as well as challenges us to live a life of holiness. This simple statement is packed with far-reaching implications for the Christian. It urges him/her to carefully study the ministry of

¹Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:387.

²p. 67.

Christ and to discern ways and means by which he/she may implement such a ministry in light of personal gifts and talents. Any attempt to downgrade the ramifications of this text in terms of individual responsibility to minister in all areas is to take a careless step on holy ground. Ellen White presses this point in an appeal to laymen: "God's messengers are commissioned to take up the very work that Christ did while on this earth. They are to give themselves to every line of ministry that he carried on."¹ This persuasively compels us to become the kind of servant that Jesus was.

(3) We are called to be His "witnesses" in Acts 1:8: ". . . but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Christians, from the earliest history of the NT Church, have understood Jesus' challenge to be his witnesses to apply to everyone who follows him and receives of his Spirit. Now this witnessing surely involves exemplifying and illustrating Christ's life and ministry in one's own daily experience. This again points to our reactivating the ministry of Christ. We are to witness to his work and ministry by picking up where he left off. This is not the privilege of the few, but the responsibility of all who have tasted of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

(4) There is one text that perhaps more clearly than any other points to the authenticity of an every-member ministry, and

¹Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 9:130.

that is Eph 4:11-13. The New King James Version puts it very clearly:

And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. . . .

Notice that according to this passage there are certain individuals in the church who are asked to carry out certain functions, special responsibilities, so that the saints might be "perfected for the work of ministry." The term "saints" here refers to all of the believers. And here it clearly, unmistakably tells us that the saints do minister! The Greek word used here is the genitive singular of *διακονια*, *διακονιας*. This is the ministry that Christ specifically stated he had come to perform (Luke 22:27; Matt 20:28). The supreme model for this ministry is Jesus.

We can then say unequivocally that every Christian is a minister in the sense that he is to reproduce the servant role as specifically delineated by the life of Jesus Christ to the extent that the Holy Spirit enables him through the equipping systems of the church. This does not deny the fact that there may rightly exist a corps of ministers who are full-time in their work for Christ, and who are given special administrative and training tasks within the broad ranks of the "ministry" of all believers. There is such a "special ministry" as is seen later in this chapter. However, we

¹The New King James Version (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 1979).

desperately need to understand the tremendous personal responsibility placed on every believer to extend the work Christ began on earth nearly two thousand years ago and that the broad sense in which the term "ministry," originally applied, applies today.

A Shared Anointing

This whole concept is strengthened by the fact that when Christians are baptized they are acknowledged by God as ministers. We are "anointed" in a way similar to the way Jesus was when He was baptized. As we look at the record of scripture we find how clear this really is.

In Luke 4, which we studied previously, we read in vs. 18 how Jesus referred to His own anointing to preach the gospel: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel. . . ." We know that this "anointing" took place when He was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist and referred to His receiving the Spirit. Acts 10:38 speaks of it:

You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed [ἐχρίσεν] Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how he went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him.

The word here translated "anointed" is a derivative of the Greek word χρίω which literally means "to rub the body or parts of it," "to stroke it."¹ When referring to oils or fats χρίω specifically means "to smear," or "to anoint,"² and in a religious setting

¹Walter Grundmann, "χρίω," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1974), 9:494.

²Ibid.

it suggests an act of "consecration" to a service or office. It came to be a method of instituting a dignity, function, or privilege on behalf of someone by placing something on them, usually oil.¹ In this case, Jesus is being consecrated by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He is thus being consecrated for the public ministry He is about to begin. This can be seen as a special preparation given to Jesus so that His ministry might be powerful and effective.

As mentioned already, this anointing took place when He was baptized. The scriptures clearly portray the event of the Holy Spirit being placed on Him in connection with His own baptism, "And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him" (Matt 3:16). Again, this marks the beginning of His public teaching and preaching ministry. It might be said that He is now officially the Messiah or "the anointed."² This anointing gives special recognition to this important transitional point in the life of our Saviour. Luke records how sometime after this He began to preach and teach in the surrounding towns and villages with a newly discovered abundance of power, the invincible power of the Spirit (Luke 4:14, 15).

It should be pointed out that He was baptized with both water and Spirit-power, just as every Christian must be born of both water and Spirit. Remember that Jesus said to Nicodemus, ". . . Truly,

¹Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 439.

²"Messiah," Smith's Bible Dictionary (1979), pp. 400, 401.

truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

In this dual baptism or "birth" Jesus was serving as an example for all Christians who begin their walk with God as His servants. I believe this example suggests that we should have an experience similar to His. We too are to be baptized by the water and the Spirit. And at the time of this baptism we are to take on new responsibilities and privileges as "ambassadors" of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:20). We too are "anointed" for a special ministry. The fact that we have the privilege of being anointed with the Holy Spirit at the time of our water baptism is evident by virtue of the promise we are all given in conjunction with baptism. Not that we do not have the Spirit of God working in our lives previous to water baptism, but in the sense that there is a special manifestation of the Spirit's power made available at this time. At least this is so if we take the Scriptures at face value. Peter said to those brought under conviction at Pentecost, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

This reception of the Spirit or "anointing" was not unique to this special Pentecostal experience because the next verse goes on to say it is a promise that apparently extends beyond that immediate context. Since we understand God to be calling people to Him today, we have reason to believe that this still applies, "For the promise is for you and your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself" (Acts 2:39).

This means that even modern disciples should be seen as anointed by the Holy Spirit for their work of ministry. This is made supremely clear in 1 John 2. Here John addresses his own converts and the church membership at large¹ and tells all that they are "anointed" of God:

Children, it is the last hour. . . . But you have an anointing [χρῖσμα] from the Holy One, and you all know . . . the anointing [χρῖσμα] which you received from Him abides in you . . . ; but as His anointing [χρῖσμα] teaches you about all things . . . abide in Him. (1 John 2:18, 20, 27)

The Greek word χρῖσμα used here in both verses 20 and 27 comes directly from χρίω. A form of this same word was used in Acts 10:38 to refer to Christ's anointing at the time when he received the Holy Spirit at His baptism. We are anointed, then, in a way similar to Christ's anointing. We are not set aside as the Saviour of the world in the unique way He was, which is to acknowledge an important degree of uniqueness in His mission and anointing (Heb 1-9); yet we are commissioned to assist Christ in saving the world as servants. We become "anointed ones" of the "anointed one!" The similarity of our anointing and Christ's is important in impressing us with our responsibility to follow Christ in service and in helping us understand that we, like Christ, can be enabled to be powerful and effective through the operation of the Holy Spirit. Ellen White beautifully portrays this in her book, The Desire of Ages:

The most childlike disciple is the most efficient in labor for God . . . the Holy Spirit will give unto him glimpses

¹"Little Children" [1 John 2:1], SDA Bible Commentary, ed. F. D. Nichol (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1953-57), 7:635.

of Jesus that will strengthen and uplift the soul. From communion with Christ he will go forth to work for those who are perishing in their sins. He is anointed for his mission; and he succeeds where many of the learned and intellectually wise would fail.

This fact should add great dignity to our work as ministers and should, beyond a shadow of a doubt, proclaim clearly the fact that our baptism marks the beginning point of ministry. This is the commissioning point of our official, public ministry in witnessing to Christ through our gifts. This is recognized by various Christian writers. Ayres says, for example, "If you are baptized, you are a minister of Christ."²

Fenhagen in his recent book, Ministry and Solitude, makes two statements that are appropriate at this point:

Ministry is the word used by Christians to describe the way in which they live out the implications of their baptism.³

I believe deeply that the laity of the church are called by virtue of their baptism to share in the ministry of the gospel.⁴

Some would go so far as to suggest that this "anointing" or commissioning at baptism is a kind of "ordination" for this lay Christian ministry. Stephen Neill and Hans-Ruedi Weber in The Layman in Christian History, state clearly their conviction that "Ordination to the laity was affected by the sacrament of baptism. . . ."⁵ Ellen G. White suggests the same when she refers to the mutual responsibility that all baptized believers share to evangelize the world,

¹(Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1898), pp. 435-36.

²p. 29.

³p. 18

⁴Ibid., p. 13.

⁵p. 31.

All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. For this work the church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vow are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.¹

So all members who are baptized are anointed or "ordained" by the Holy Spirit for their work of Ministry. This implies that all of us have been "called" into service. When we talk about being "called," we usually think of a full-time leader who has felt a strong inner conviction that God is inviting him to give his life in total service. While it is valid to understand that such a call may be genuine, it must be remembered that every member is called into the general ministry of all believers. It is not appropriate to see some as "called" ministers and others as "not called."

A Shared Calling

Basic to NT teaching is the idea of the "priesthood of all believers," and that this priesthood or "ministry" exists because we have received a "call" from God. Notice once again 1 Pet 2:9:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.

The Greek work used here for "called" is *καλεσαντος*. This is rooted in the word *καλεω* which means to "call," "summon," or "invite" someone to do something.² Here we are specifically called out of darkness into a fellowship of light which consists of a great ministerial priesthood that is to publish the praises of God. It is very clear

¹ Desire of Ages, p. 822.

² Karl L. Schmidt, "*καλεω*," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1972), 3:487, 488.

that every believer is called into this fellowship, as Peter suggests, even those who are "newborn babes" (vs. 2) in the faith.

The very same word *καλεσαντος* is used again in 2 Tim 1:9 where Paul talks to young Timothy. While Peter had used this word to refer to the calling of all believers, Paul sees no problem in using it in reference to the call he and Timothy have received as gospel workers. Timothy apparently served as a pastor for a time,¹ yet Paul can say:

[Our Lord] . . . has saved us, and called [*καλεσαντος*] us with a holy calling [*κλησει*], not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity.

Also in 1 Cor 1:2 we read how God has called his people into a special fellowship of saints. The idea seems to be that this is a privileged invitation extended to all who are willing to call on Christ's name. It extends to all the disciples in the church of Corinth in its immediate sense, and it seems applicable to disciples today:

. . . to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling [*κλητοις*] with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. . . .

κλητοις, used here, again comes from *καλεω*. We begin to see that the concept of every Christian being called into service and fellowship has a solid Biblical foundation. This adds further credence to the ministry of all believers as is noted by Ayers:

When Paul wrote to a group of churches to 'lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called (Ephesians

¹"Timothy," SDA Bible Dictionary, p. 1099.

4:1),¹ he was not addressing the office-bearers in the churches, but every member, corporate and single. . . . Until laymen know that they are called, they cannot begin to grasp the significance of their ministry. An understanding of the statement, 'You are called,' is essential. 'You are called,' means that God has already and explicitly asked you to enter his service.

Shared Gifts

The question naturally arises, "How is this 'ministry' of all believers carried out? How is this mutual 'calling' carried out?" Certainly we should attempt to duplicate the ministry of Jesus by putting forth the greatest effort using every natural talent and capacity that we have. But in addition to this the Lord assures us that we can make a meaningful contribution because he has given us spiritual gifts that enable us to carry out our ministry with special effectiveness. In Eph 4:7 the apostle Paul introduces the idea of spiritual gifts, after having talked about the "calling" God has given to us in vs. 1, "But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift", (vs. 7).

Paul implies a relationship between our calling and the reception of some gift(s). To each of us is given some special spiritual capabilities that will contribute to the overall ministry of the body. Not all receive the same gifts, as is evident by Paul's statement in his letter to the Romans: "And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly . . ." (Rom 12:6). But God blesses each of us with capacities that are to be blended into an effective and powerful

¹P. 34.

ministry as a group. Our ministry is never to be viewed as independent from the ministries carried out by others. Paul, in 1 Cor 12:7, tells us that the various gifts are given for the "common good." In this way, the ministry of Christ becomes a holistic ministry, because all of the spiritual gifts are applied through the ministry of the entire body--they adequately reproduce the broad-based ministry of Jesus Christ as outlined in chapter I. The scriptural idea of an individual and corporate calling of believers to ministry, then, implies a shared calling that can only be effectively fulfilled through the reception and implementation of spiritual gifts. In other words, "to speak of total ministry in the church is to speak of the ministry of all of the baptized, each dependent on the gifts of the other."¹

In conclusion, we must acknowledge that all disciples of Jesus Christ are of necessity ministers. We have looked at four scriptural references that confront us with this reality. Also we have looked at the testimony of other Christian Bible students which has further elucidated this fact. We further learned that every member is prepared for a shared ministry in at least three respects: (1) they are anointed by the Holy Spirit, (2) they are called into service, and (3) they are gifted with special spiritual capabilities.

Special Ministries

So far we have come to understand that Christian ministry focuses on the primary theme of serving the Lord toward the ultimate

¹Fenhagen, Ministry in Solitude, p. 14.

objective of bringing men, women, and young people into reconciliation with God. We have also learned that all aspects of ministry must be modelled after the ministry of Jesus which has certain very clear characteristics. Further, we have learned that every church member is a "minister," in the sense of having a basic responsibility to duplicate the ministry of Jesus in as many ways as the Spirit makes possible, i.e., by the use of every talent, opportunity, and spiritual gift. This ministry of all believers is for the building up of God's church. Every member is anointed, called, and gifted to make an impact in successful ministry.

This fact raises the question about workers in the church who have been specially recognized by a special ordination and given unique leadership responsibilities. In what sense are they ministers? Is their ministry different from the ministry of all believers? If so, what is the difference, and what are the implications of this difference? Today in the church we have men who are serving as full-time pastors, administrators, and teachers who are specially honored and to whom we look for the carrying out of certain responsibilities. If we are all ministers, why do we give them the esteem that we do? Is it appropriate or inappropriate? We should hasten to say that the fact that all members are ministers in the broad sense does not ignore the fact that God has throughout the history of the NT church called individuals to certain specialized ministries that have very definite leadership implications beyond their basic call to ministry as a believer. Anders Nygren said, "Just as all Christians could be called 'the chosen,' 'the called,' so some were

chosen and called for special ministry."¹ God has always recognized the special purpose and function of leadership in the church as a whole. God saw from the beginning the need for leadership. Spiritual leadership within the church, it would seem, includes sub-functions of providing motivation, administrative direction, training, and even an exemplary life-style. God has historically selected certain individuals with the right combination of gifts, character traits, and personality to fill these leadership roles.

The people that God chooses for these special ministries or responsibilities have usually been recognized by a "special call" and a "special ordination," or act of consecration. This call and ordination is in addition to the basic call and ordination to Christian ministry as given to all members. Even a church of priests needs leadership and administrative structure. God knew this and the members of the apostolic church recognized this. That is why there was definite leadership and organization in the NT church. The author of Ferment in the Ministry has noted this:

There is no evidence that leadership of a proper kind was scorned [in the first century], or of sheer equalitarianism. . . . What can properly be permanently inferred about the ministry from what we know of the first century seems as follows. (1) Ministry in general is always the total service of the total Christian community, whether in relation to its own members or to others. (2) Any kind of ministry must, however, be organized, so that leadership is always needed. (3) Leadership² should be according to competence, however this be defined.

¹This Is the Church (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1952), p. 124.

²Hiltner, p. 35.

Actually, we need to look back into the Old and New Testaments before we can fully appreciate the idea of leadership and ordination to "special ministry." And here I am using the term "special ministry" to talk about a leadership ministry that is normally recognized by a special ordination and a special call of God. It does not necessarily imply a full-time or paid status, though it has been and may be expressed with these characteristics.

Old Testament Examples

In the OT the idea of God selecting special people for specialized tasks of leadership is very clear. God called prophets, priests, and kings. For example, he called Moses. Exodus 3 describes this simple invitation to leadership:

'Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel out of Egypt.' But Moses said to God, 'Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?' And he said, 'Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship at this mountain.' (Exod 3:10-12)

God called Jeremiah and consecrated him to service before he was even born. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jer 1:5). God also called Aaron and his sons to the priesthood as described in Leviticus.

Then Moses had Aaron and his sons come near, and washed them 'Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'take Aaron and his sons with him and the garments and the anointing oil and the bull of the sin offering, and the two rams and the basket of unleavened bread; and assemble all the congregation to the doorway of the tent of meeting. . . .' Moses said to the congregation 'This is the thing which the Lord has

commanded to do.' Then Moses had Aaron and his sons come near, and washed them with water. . . . Then he poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. (Lev 8:1, 2, 5, 6, 12).

David was called to serve as King of the nation. Years before he actually began to serve, the Lord designated him as heir to the throne.

Now the Lord said to Samuel, 'How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for myself among his sons.' . . . Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward. And Samuel arose and went to Ramah. (1 Sam 16:1, 13)

Others were called and recognized as well, such as Samuel (1 Sam 3) and Isaiah (Isa 6:9). So the OT bears strong witness to the fact that God called and publicly recognized certain men as leaders serving in various capacities. As we come to the NT, we find that He continues the pattern of calling men to fulfill special leadership ministries.

The Apostles

Jesus himself set an early example by calling the twelve apostles. In Mark 1 we find the record of the "calling" of the very first disciples:

And as He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, the brother of Simon, casting a net in the sea; for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, 'Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.' And they immediately left the nets and followed Him. (Mark 1:16-18)

They were not ordained until later. Mark 3 talks about their ordination and the special assignment that Christ gave to them. Most

modern translations use the term "appointed" when describing the ordination, while the King James Version uses the term "ordain."

And He went up to the mountain and summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve [ἐποίησεν] that they might be with Him, and that He might send them out to preach, and to have authority to cast out the demons. (Mark 3:13-15; see also Matt 4:18-22, 9:9.)

The term "appointed" comes from the word ποιεω which literally means "to make, form,"¹ or "create."² He made them a band of men with the special task of preaching and casting out devils, and with a special relationship to him. Part of their work was specifically to "be with Him" (vs. 14). They were uniquely to observe His life and to share it. Ellen White comments on this event of the appointing of the disciples and suggests that they were ordained at this time by Jesus laying his hands on them:

When Jesus had ended His instruction to the disciples, He gathered the little band close about Him, and kneeling in the midst of them, and laying His hands upon their heads, He offered a prayer dedicating them to His sacred work. Thus the Lord's disciples were ordained to the gospel ministry.³

Later Christ told them, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you [ἐθηκα from τιθημι "to place"], that you should go and bear fruit . . ." (John 15:16). These men were called and formally recognized as his special representatives who were to preach and heal, and extend His work into new areas.

Later, Saul of Tarsus was also blessed with a divine call

¹Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 332.

²Herbert Braun, "ποιεω," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1968), 6:462, 463.

³Desire of Ages, p. 296.

and commission after his dramatic conversion to Christianity. We are reminded of how Ananias was sent to him as God's representative:

And the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for behold, he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight.' . . . The Lord said to him, 'Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel.' (Acts 9:11, 12, 15)

God considered Saul, who became the great apostle Paul, a "chosen vessel." Later he referred to his "appointment" to a special task in 1 Tim 2:

For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time. And for this I was appointed [ετέθην from τίθημι "to place"] a preacher and an apostle. . . . (1 Tim 2:5-7)

Again he refers to his sacred work as something very definite and his call an identifiable experience as he opens the letter to the Romans: "Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle set apart for the gospel of God" (Rom 1:1). He, along with Barnabas, was clearly recognized by the church in a special service, which included the laying on of hands, after he had demonstrated his commitment and gained experience (Acts 13:1-3). This laying on of hands seemed to be a symbol of blessing and the extending of the authority of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18, 19).

Notice that Paul and Barnabas were "separated" and recognized as "chosen" even from among other Christians who were in their own right "ministers," being baptized members of the church. In other words, they are given a "special ministry" among ministers. This is not to be seen necessarily as a promotion, it is not "going up

the ladder." as much as it is the receiving of a specialized assignment--a ministry with a particular leadership focus or emphasis.

The Evangelists

The NT also records Christ's call to a larger group of men to do a special work of evangelism in Luke 10. This group we refer to as the seventy:

Now after this the Lord appointed [ἀπεδείξευ] seventy others, and sent them two and two ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. And He was saying to them . . . "Go your ways; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. And whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you. And stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house. And whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat what is set before you; and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' . . . The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me." (Luke 10:1, 3-9, 16)

They were "appointed" and sent out. The Greek word used here is a derivative of ἀναδείκνυμι which means "to show anything by raising it aloft, as a torch; to display," or to "mark out, constitute, appoint by some outward sign."¹ They were given the special assignment to visit areas where Christ Himself would come, to sow gospel seed and cultivate receptivity for his visit.

Ellen White refers to their work by saying:

As He [Christ] sent out the twelve, so He 'appointed seventy others, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, whither He Himself was about to come.'

¹Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 21.

. . . The directions to the seventy were similar to those that had been given to the twelve; but the command to the twelve, not to enter into any city of the Gentiles or of the Samaritans, was not given to the seventy. . . . Like the apostles, the seventy had received supernatural endowments as a seal of their mission.

So these seventy evangelists were ordained and sent out with a mission similar to that of the apostles only with a broader target group. They were obviously very successful as they came back rejoicing in their newly realized power: "And the seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name'" (Luke 10:17).

The Deacons

Then there was the establishment and ordination of the seven deacons after the resurrection of Christ and the Pentecostal harvest experienced by the Church. These deacons were organized for a special ministry which apparently involved caring for the physical and financial needs of the congregation²--especially those of the Greek widows (Acts 6:1). This is described as follows:

And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.' And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And

¹Desire of Ages, pp. 488, 490.

²Ellen G. White, The Acts of the Apostles (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), p. 89.

these they brought before the apostles: and after praying, they laid hands on them. And the word of God kept on spreading. . . . (Acts 6:2-7)

There is a specific mentioning of the act of ordination as there is a description of the laying on of hands. The entire congregation participated in the selection process.

These men were chosen by the entire community of believers on the basis of their character, wisdom, and evident endowment with the Holy Spirit. The twelve ordained them with prayer and the laying on of hands.¹

This ministry of the deacons freed the disciples to concentrate totally on what they called the "ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4)--which they apparently saw as their primary work. However, it must be realized that this did not imply that these deacons did not have the responsibility to carry out other functions of the ministry of Jesus, including the ministry of "reconciliation" or the "ministry of the Word." After all, we know for a fact that God used Stephen, one of these deacons, to perform miracles and to powerfully argue doctrine with the Jewish leaders, to the extent that many were won to the church and his enemies were angered and frustrated (Acts 6:7, 8, 10). In Acts 7 Stephen presented a powerful sermon that brought conviction to his hearers. So the ministry of these deacons was wider than merely "serving tables."

Philip, who also served as a deacon, has been considered a missionary and an evangelist. He went to Samaria and led people to Christ through the study of the Scriptures (Acts 8:25, 35, 38) and even baptized! So deacons also ministered the Word even though they

¹Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:387.

had a special ordained ministry of caring for certain other aspects of church life. Apostles may have been specialists who were fully devoted to the "ministry of the word," but they were not the only ones who performed it. "Special ministries" were never intended to give one group of people in the church absolute and sole control over certain areas of ministry. They were rather to complement, strengthen, and provide leadership for the ministry of all believers.

The Elders

Finally, we have the witness of the NT that certain individuals in the early church were also called to serve as "elders," with the special assignment of serving as pastors and overseers. There are many examples of men being acknowledged as elders; however, we will only briefly refer to the Biblical evidence here, since this topic is more thoroughly explored later. The work and the identity of the NT elder is of vital importance to this report, as we see later.

In Acts 14 we read of the appointment of various elders in different areas for the sake of organizational stability.

And after they [Paul and Barnabas] had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue to the faith, and saying, 'Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.' And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:21-23)

The evidence points to the fact that these men who were ordained as elders were recognized for special service by the laying on of hands. In 1 Tim 5 we have a caution given to us about laying

hands on a person without due consideration. This statement is made in the context of discussing the respect due to an elder (1 Tim 5:17, 19).

I solemnly charge you in the presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality. Do not lay hands upon any one too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others. . . . (1 Tim 5:22)

We conclude from a study of the Old and New Testaments, then, that the idea of "special ministry" leadership has been maintained through the centuries by God. He looks at it with favor and recognizes it as a blessing to His work on earth. It is very positive to maintain leadership functions within the church; in fact, it is essential.

Recognizing Special Ministries

It is also important to have this leadership duly recognized as is evident in the past by the way in which it was publicly acknowledged by an act of consecration. It appears to be perfectly legitimate and in harmony with Biblical custom and example to so recognize certain leadership roles within the church today.

It should be made clear that while in a broad sense every spiritual gift is a special ministry, there are certain of these individual gifts that are especially significant to the health and orderly functioning of the church and that, according to God's example through the history of the church, are to be recognized by a special call and a special commissioning of the church, usually evidenced by ordination, i.e., the laying on of hands. It would appear that Eph 4 identifies some of the most crucial of these special gifts which are to uniquely prepare the church for its total

ministry: "And he [Christ] gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11, 12).

These particular gifts are for the specific purpose of "equipping" the saints for their work of ministering or serving according to their particular capacity or gift. This denotes a dual purpose of organizing and training. Those who have these particular gifts in the church may properly be recognized as having the leadership responsibility to assist individual members of the "body" for service by organizing their efforts and by helping them learn to effectively use their God-given capacities in such a way that the church will grow and prosper. Understanding this, Ellen White has perceptively suggested that: "Christian ministers, physicians, teachers have a broader work than many recognize. They are not only to minister to the people but to teach them to minister."¹ In most churches today those having the particular gifts mentioned in Eph 4--of being an apostle, prophet, evangelist, or pastor-teacher--would be considered as having this responsibility and therefore a legitimate candidate for special recognition within the respective denomination.

In the NT references examined earlier we saw examples of "special ministries" that were recognized by the early church. Each of these ministries can be grouped under the four headings listed in

¹The Ministry of Healing (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1905), pp. 148, 149.

Eph 4, at least in a broad sense. For example, we noted the twelve apostles and the seventy evangelists. They fit directly into two of the four categories mentioned. Then we looked at the seven deacons. While perhaps not fitting so neatly into these categories, they can be seen as generally performing both a pastoral and evangelistic function in the absence of elders who were not appointed until later in the history of the church. We have already referred to the evangelistic work of two deacons, Philip and Stephen. Obviously the special work of caring for the Greek widows was to a large extent pastoral (Acts 6:1; John 21:17). "At an early stage in the church's growth, it became advisable for the Twelve to delegate a pastoral responsibility for the Hellenist widows to a group of seven disciples."¹ Clearly here is a recognition of the pastoral function of the seven deacons in those early days.

The elders, however, were definitely considered pastor-teachers--as is made certain by the witness of a number of passages such as Acts 20, 1 Tim 3, 1 Pet 5. The pastoral work of the elders is explored further in a subsequent section of this report. It may be desirable to suggest that other functions could be legitimately acknowledged as "special ministries" and sustained by ordination. It may be that with changing conditions in the church additional "special ministries" will become necessary. However, it is clear that there are certain limited and distinctive functions that have been so acknowledged in the early history of the Christian church.

¹Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:387.

Since the organization and operation of this early period was to serve as a "model" for the church as it expanded throughout the world, it is necessary that we be very careful about any changes made.¹ "The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel."²

There are many questions being raised in the 1980s in various churches, including the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as to the appropriateness of recognizing other ministries by ordination. Questions are specifically raised about whether or not we should ordain ministers of music, conference treasurers, communication secretaries, or youth and educational directors, for example. If they are ordained should each have a separate ordination or one "gospel" ordination? How far can ordination be stretched and still remain meaningful? More study has to be done in this area in order for Adventists and others to have a clear position on these questions.³ It seems important to emphasize here that each of the special ministries has its own focus and special category of responsibilities. Being ordained as a deacon did not have the same meaning or imply the same responsibility as the ordination to apostleship. Each ordination had its own scope, some having a broader range of responsibility than others. Sometimes an ordination to special ministry seems to have had geographic implications as well. For example, some functions,

¹Raoul Dederen, "A Theology of Ordination," Ministry 51, no. 2 (February 1978), p. 24-M.

²White, Acts of the Apostles, p. 91.

³Dederen, p. 24-0.

such as deacon or elder, seem to have been targeted primarily for the local church (Acts 14), whereas others, such as apostles and evangelists, were apparently commissioned (with full authority of Christ and the backing of the church) to reach out and establish the gospel in unentered areas (Luke 9:6; 10:1-11).

In conclusion, we are clear on the issue of whether or not God looks with favor on the idea of recognizing the "special ministry" of those who perform the special leadership functions that were worthy of ordination in the NT. The one who said, "I change not" (Mal 3:6), surely still upholds this concept as appropriate for His church. To the extent that it is respected and supported in modern times, will the Christian Church be blessed and the ministry of all believers enhanced. The existence of "special ministries" does not, however, destroy the partnership enjoyed with all believers who have the mutual responsibility of sharing the gospel to a dying world. These "special ministries" are to bring us together, to serve us by bringing gospel order into the ranks of the church, and to help us discover our own unique way of serving the common cause. Finally, as a result of Biblical study in recent times, we are seeing how this can be.

We are . . . seeing the emergence of a theology that understands the church not as a community gathered around a minister, but as a community of many ministries each dependent on the other and all dependent on the Lord.

Special ministries never stand alone. They are subject to the total ministry of the total church. They provide a "servant" image for

¹Fenhagen, Ministry in Solitude, p. 2.

leadership that all should be inspired to emulate. They should contribute to our standing arm in arm as a church, as we face the enemy in the great controversy between God and Satan.

CHAPTER III

THE LEGITIMACY OF LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY

The New Testament Model

In this chapter we look more closely at the "pastor-teacher" gift within the setting of "special ministry." We seek to discover who, in the context of the NT, exercised this leadership gift. What were the characteristics of those individuals, and how were they identified? From the outset we would suggest that the pastoral role may at times have been carried out by those whom we would call "laymen" today. If this is true, the idea of lay participation in pastoral ministry is given tremendous support and credibility.

It seems clear that in the beginning the apostles were identified as the primary pastors of the church. Their work was not only to open the work in new areas as evangelists and missionaries (Luke 9:6) but also to have responsibilities to nurture those who were coming into the church in response to the gospel proclamation (John 21:15). Jesus highlighted this when, after the resurrection, He challenged Peter to care for His followers. In essence, He used the shepherd imagery to describe Peter's work as an apostle from this time forward. Now that the "Chief Shepherd" was soon to leave the earth (1 Pet 5:4; John 14:28), He asked His chosen apostles to maintain a shepherd's care over His people. He said to Peter in John 21:15-17:

. . . 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Tend my lambs.' He said to him again a second time, 'Simon, son of John, do you love Me?' He said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' He said to him, 'Shepherd My sheep.' He said to him the third time . . . 'Tend my sheep.'

Jesus felt it essential to impress Peter with this very significant responsibility. Later we find Paul and other apostles sensing this vital responsibility to pastor.

Later in the experience of the early church the Apostles discovered that they were being overburdened by some of the pastoral demands that were being placed on them, so they appealed to the church to select seven godly men who would assist them by fulfilling certain pastoral duties (Acts 6). It is clear that these individuals did carry out some pastoral duties.

Local Elders as Pastors

The time came when having apostles and deacons was not sufficient to meet the needs of the ever-expanding church. New congregations were being formed in new areas, and it was impossible for the order of the church to be maintained without the assistance of a new class of workers. And so elders were established. We have no direct Biblical reference to the establishment of the role of elder; however, by the time the events of Acts 11 are recorded, they appear and are actively functioning. As we follow the NT references regarding the elders, we find that they came to perform a very crucial function in the church. In fact, they came to be recognized as the pastors of the local churches in support of the apostles who more and more were forced to be absent because of their missionary

responsibility to enter new areas. Elders sustained the work of local leadership while the apostles expanded the territories of the church. "There is never, however, in any of the sources a confusion of the apostles and elders, for the former were missionaries, the latter stationary leaders of the local churches."¹

The Biblical testimony is that the apostles willingly recognized these elders as sharing pastoral duties. While apostles may have been understood as "supervising pastors" and as having broad administrative responsibility, they themselves looked to the local elders as pastors handling the needs of the local church on a daily basis. Peter, for example, acknowledges the shared pastoral role when he speaks to a group of elders:

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow-elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; . . . nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (1 Pet 5:1-3)

Commentaries and authors have supported this conclusion over and over again. Ted Engstrom says: "The pastor-teachers (Ephesians 4) were the shepherds . . . they were probably the equivalent of the 'bishops' and the 'elders.'"² Shepherd says: "That Christian elders exercised pastoral duties may be inferred from the references in 1 Peter 5:1-4; James 5:14."³

¹M. H. Shepherd, "Elder in the N.T.," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (1962), 2:74.

²Ted W. Engstrom, The Making of a Christian Leader (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976), p. 56.

³Shepherd, "Elder in the N.T.," 2:74.

Actually what we find is that the apostles gave direction to the selection of local elders in every town where a church was established. In Acts 14 we read:

And after they [Paul and Barnabas] had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith . . . and when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. (Acts 14:21-23)

Paul in his letter to Titus talks of this same plan and impresses upon Titus that this was his primary goal in Crete: "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order that which remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you" (Titus 1:5).

Lay Pastors

It seems proper to say that the strategy of the apostles in the early church was to designate key lay leaders to serve newly organized churches in the Christian community and to spread the kingdom of God. Now this is rather significant. To realize that these men were virtually laymen may be considered by some as rather shocking; nevertheless it appears to be the case. Apparently, the men assigned to be elders were also, in the early days, relatively new converts who were viewed as having the proper spiritual gifts (Acts 14). Later, as the church developed and organizational patterns matured, the church emphasized experience in the faith as a prerequisite for the office of elder (1 Tim 3:6).

These men were laymen first in the sense that the Early Church did not distinguish between the clergy and the laity because

it considered that they were one and the same, as we discovered from our word study earlier. All members were recognized, no matter what their special gift or function, as part of the laity.

But even in the popular usage of the term "laymen," these men can be understood to have certain characteristics that would properly classify them under this title. Men like Lloyd Perry have concluded this after sifting through the facts. "According to apostolic practice, the ministry was carried out by laymen deputed by the apostles to serve the Christian community . . . the early churches were started by laymen."¹

Even the respected pioneer author of lay ministry, Hendrik Kraemer, recognized that the leadership functions of the early church were performed by what we today call "laymen." In A Theology of the Laity he says:

Observing that in the N.T. the diakonia or ministry was to a great extent charismatic, we may confidently derive from it that many apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, etc., were lay people. The N.T. deals mainly with functions and vocations not with offices as a rule. This implies a prominent role of lay people in the life and witness of the church.²

Certainly he was implying that the pastor-teacher gift was a gift properly exercised by laymen.

This idea of laymen serving as pastors should not surprise us. When we understand the Biblical teaching on spiritual gifts, we know that gifts were freely distributed to all members of the

¹Getting the Church on Target (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), p. 105.

²p. 19.

church (Eph 4:7). One of the gifts that was to be manifested was the pastor-teacher gift, which happens to be a dual gift. This gift designates a person who is gifted for both pastoral and teaching functions as is recognized by the Greek phrase, "τους δε ποιμενας και διδασκαλους" in Eph 4:11, translated "some as pastors and teachers." The use of only one article to introduce the phrase suggests its duality. As the S.D.A. Bible Commentary says, "the structure of this phrase, in the Greek suggests that Paul intends to speak of two phases of one office."¹

Peter Wagner properly states:

Some books on spiritual gifts make a strong point that in Ephesians 4:11 the gifts most often listed as "pastor" and "teacher" should be written "pastor-teacher" . . . This is probably correct, at least in the translation that best reflects the sense of the Greek text.²

There is every indication that this gift was freely poured out upon laymen in the church, as were the other gifts. As the Holy Spirit saw a person's natural ability and as the need arose in the church, it was duly distributed. Who is to say that this pastor-teacher gift was only given to those who were to become full-time, paid, professionals connected with a highly organized ecclesiastical system; and that the gift would never appear outside of this? Various individuals must have received the pastor-teacher gift. It is true that some of these may have become full-time, paid workers of the church later on in order that the burgeoning work be properly

¹"Pastors and teachers" [Eph 4:11], (1957), 6:1023.

²Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow (Glendale, California: Regal Books Division, G/L Publications, 1979), pp. 76, 77.

coordinated and administered. But it is not necessary to conclude that every person with this gift followed that path.

Church Employment

There are other facts that allow us to conclude that these elders were laymen in the sense we apply it today. What about the issue of church employment! Generally we have thought of laymen as not being employed by the church. But we must remember that there are scores of secretaries, office assistants, maintenance personnel, etc., in most churches who are paid and yet considered laymen. So being employed and paid by a church or an organization of the church does not always necessitate the loss of one's identity as a layman. It should not concern us if at times elders in the NT were reimbursed for their labors. This should not, of itself, take away from their lay identity--especially when there is ample reason to conclude that in the Early Church they were not paid!

Take, for example, the earliest days when elders were appointed in every town and village where there was a group of believers (Acts 14:23). It would have been difficult, if not impossible, outside a special miracle, for the new little churches to employ full-time elders to serve as pastors in the various villages and towns where Paul and Barnabas were establishing churches. As soon as groups were formed, several elders were assigned to each church. It is highly improbable that they were full-time, paid employees of the fledgling little groups, or that finances were strong enough in some of the established churches to be able to pay for the large numbers of elders that would have served in these many far-flung areas.

These men, in my view, had to be local laymen who donated part or all of their time to the church. Later, when the churches became more stable, these men may have accepted some remuneration, but it hardly seems likely in those early days.

Also remember that each of these little churches had numbers of elders, not just one. We will have to radically change our view of pastoral ministry if we are to believe that the group of elders in each NT church represented a multiple-staff corps of full-time, paid ministers. Do we really think that when Paul met with the elders of the Ephesus church he was meeting with full-time, paid employees? "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church" (Acts 20:17). It seems more likely that they were a group of lay elders who were serving as "lay" pastors! I believe that the circumstance favors the understanding that these elders were elders serving as lay pastors. Actually we should further remember that in the earliest days of the church the people sold their properties as needs arose and shared as circumstances dictated. If this pattern continued very long, the elders would not have been employees in the sense we think of today. "And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need" (Acts 2:44, 45).

Now it is true that later in the church's history, we find Paul encouraging the idea of giving wages to elders if they have been faithful workers (1 Tim 5:18; 1 Cor 9:14). So he supports the appropriateness of remuneration for gospel workers. However this does

not deny what happened in the church in the early days, nor does it disallow the legitimacy of those who may have served the church without taking advantage of this privilege. There may have been those who even in later times were willing and able to donate part of their time to serve as lay pastors. Or it may have been that men earned part of their living by means of part-time secular employment, while also receiving some income for part-time service in the church.¹

If we think being a non-employee of the church disqualifies a person from being considered a legitimate ordained worker in the church, we had better consider the apostle Paul's ministry again. Paul generally did not receive pay for his work as an apostolic pastor. Paul was a layman most of his ministry, if by layman we mean someone who pursues a secular occupation in addition to his part-time volunteer work in the church. According to the book of Acts he was a tentmaker, and it was by using this skill that he made his living:

After these things he left Athens and went to Corinth, and he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them and because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and they were working; for by trade they were tent-makers. (Acts 18:1)

Paul testified that he had earned his own keep by hard work and even had helped provide for others who were with him. He had coveted no other person's wealth, because he had earned enough to care for his needs.

¹Clinton Shankel, "Field Test of an Instructional Program for Local Church Elders" (D.Min dissertation, Andrews University, 1974), p. 39.

I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak. . . .
(Acts 20:33-35)

This appears to be more than a little token work on the side to keep physically fit. Paul spent significant amounts of time working and earning a secular living. Notice how he describes himself as working "day and night":

Nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you; not because we do not have the right to this, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you that you might follow our example. (2 Thess 3:8, 9)

It is very possible that there were elders who did follow his example and modelled his custom of self-sustenance. There is only one occasion when it appears Paul took assistance from the church. He acknowledges the event somewhat reluctantly, it seems. He apparently had been so busy in Corinth that his resources ran low and it became necessary for him to accept assistance for a time from his friends in Macedonia.

. . . I was present with you and was in need, I was not a burden to anyone; for when the brethren came from Macedonia, they fully supplied my need, and in everything I kept myself from being a burden to you, and will continue to do so. (2 Cor 11:8, 9)

Paul felt it was a blessing to be able to provide for himself and indicated that being independent of financial remuneration was crucial to his own sense of well-being. Even though it was legitimate for gospel workers to be paid, he said he would rather "die" than have anyone take away the privilege of supporting himself. Notice how strongly he states this:

So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. But I have used none of these things. And I am not writing these things that it may be done so in my case; for it would be better for me to die than have any man make my boast an empty one. (1 Cor 9:14, 15)

The fact that Paul here feels the need to argue in support of others receiving remuneration for gospel service--appealing even to the OT practice of paying the priests (vs. 13)--also implies that at this time church workers were not generally paid.

After looking at Paul's experience we conclude that in the NT it was possible to carry out a "special ministry" without necessarily being an employee of the church and receiving systematic compensation. It is also possible to be a leader in the church while remaining a "layman" in the sense that one is not a full-time minister in the church. Weber says in Salty Christians: "Christ does not grant special gifts only to men and women who are fulltime, lifetime employees to the church."¹

Ordination

Now it is true that the elders of the NT were ordained. But ordination does not always destroy a church member's laymanship, even in the popular usage. At present many churches ordain deacons and elders according to the NT model without considering them as part of the so-called clergy. In every church, Seventh-day Adventists have local elders who are considered part of the laity. The same seems to be true in the Church of Scotland.² There seems to be a

¹p. 17.

²Jock Stein, Ministries of the 1980's (General Assembly Report, Church of Scotland, 1979), p. 46.

very different way of viewing the full-time minister as compared to the part-time elder in contemporary churches despite the fact that both are ordained.

Another lesson we learn from Paul's experience is that God can and does use gifted people in a dynamic way even if they are not formally ("specially") ordained. Paul was eventually ordained for his special work as an apostle and missionary. But in the early phase of his ministry he was not. Yet God mightily used him. In fact, it has been suggested that he labored for at least a year without being ordained.¹ The Bible describes the ordination of Paul and Barnabas as follows:

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene . . . and Saul. And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. (Acts 13:1-3)

Notice this insightful comment on this event:

God had abundantly blessed the labors of Paul and Barnabas . . . but neither of them had as yet been formally ordained to the gospel ministry. . . . Both Paul and Barnabas had already received their commission from God Himself, and the ceremony of the laying on of hands added no new grace or virtual qualification.²

This is to suggest that individuals in the church may rightly make a contribution to the church through the active use of their spiritual gifts in various ministries even though they are not formally ordained. The same lesson is learned when we realize that the

¹White, Acts of the Apostles, p. 160.

²Ibid., pp. 160-62.

men who were selected to serve as the seven deacons were already "full of the Holy Spirit" before they were ordained to their special task. The church sought out men that God had already been using and put the blessing of the body on them while delegating additional authority and responsibility.

If a gifted individual has a valid gift of "special ministry," i.e., one of the ordained ministries demonstrated in the NT, it shall be recognized in due time by the church, but it may not be so recognized immediately. It may be healthy to give individuals a time to mature and test their gifts, as would be true of someone being considered for a contemporary role as lay pastor. It is possible, in light of Paul's experience, that there were individuals in the NT church who were exercising the pastor-teacher gift while not ordained to the "special ministry" of a local elder, and legitimately so, since as in Paul's case, ordination does not bestow "new grace or virtual qualification."¹ It does, however, add the blessing of the church and delegate organizational authority.² But let us not make more of it than we should. We need to remember that later in the church's history the idea of ordination was abused. Powers were attributed to it that never should have been. As Ellen White says:

At a later date the rite of ordination by the laying on of hands was greatly abused; unwarrantable importance was attached to the act, as if a power came at once upon those who received such ordination, which immediately qualified them for any and all ministerial work. But in the setting

¹White, Acts of the Apostles, p. 162.

²Ibid., pp. 161, 162.

apart of these two apostles, there is no record indicating that any virtue was imparted by the mere act of laying on of hands.

It would be well for us to keep this in mind in the context of "special ministry."

Theological Training

So far, we have seen that on both the ordination issue and the employment issue there is no reason to invalidate the elders of the early NT period as laymen in either the Biblical sense or the sense of modern usage. But what about the issue of formal theological training? Many feel that a layman is someone who has had no such special education. How do the NT elders fare when evaluated in this sense?

We know of no such prerequisite for the elder in the early church. While he was to have a working knowledge of the scriptures and the basic talents as a teacher (1 Tim 3:2), he was not trained in any sophisticated manner. It would have been impossible for the apostles to have given heavy doses of theological training to all of the elders since many were appointed in a relatively short period of time and were sometimes separated by significant distances (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). In addition, the historical record of the early church indicated that there was no such formal theological training at this time, "There was no professional, theological training and therefore no theological seminaries."²

This is not to say that there was no training and no

¹Ibid., p. 162.

²Gibbs, God's Frozen People, p. 31.

challenging study of scripture going on. Surely there was, but it was not in a formal sense as we would think of theological training today. Surely elders sharpened their skills as time went on, and as they worked with Paul and the apostles. Some may have served as teachers in Israel before being converted to Christianity. Surely some of the converted priests and leaders were well-qualified to assist some of the Christian workers who did not have this kind of background (Acts 6:7). Remember that the apostles themselves were, with the exception of Paul, mostly "babes" (Matt 11:25) as far as formal education and wisdom were concerned. The Lord was more interested in a humble, obedient, teachable heart than He was formal theological training. Surely this was true not only in the selection of apostles but also in the appointment of elders.

Again we see that there is strong evidence to conclude that many, if not all, NT elders were indeed "laymen" according to the popular, contemporary application of the term and most definitely in the Biblical sense. This NT model of laymen serving as local elders with pastoral duties should arouse Christians everywhere, because prospects of its restoration present both a challenge and an opportunity for wider lay ministry than most have probably considered in the past. It certainly offers the hope of deepening the mutuality of ministry carried out by full-time, paid workers in the church and part-time volunteers and, in addition, the possibility of providing broader-based pastoral care and leadership in Christian churches.

The Monoepiscopal Context

As we look at the viability of the concept of having lay pastors in most contemporary Protestant Christian churches, we can conclude that lay pastoral ministry can occupy a legitimate and helpful place. There is every reason to encourage the idea of lay pastoral ministry for those laymen who genuinely possess the pastor-teacher gift. They should have the privilege of actively exercising their God-given abilities for the enrichment of the body of Christ.

On the surface this might not seem to be the case. After all, most Protestant churches have taken a strong position in favor of "monoepiscopacy," which, some suggest, might be incompatible with the idea of a strong system of lay pastoral ministry. Can lay pastoral ministry be carried out successfully in the context of monoepiscopacy? That is, can lay pastoral ministry serve within a church system where there is a "single bishop or pastor" (usually a full-time, paid, church employee) at the head of each local congregational unit?¹ The essence of contemporary monoepiscopacy is leadership by the full-time professional! Can lay ministry and professional ministry survive side-by-side? I believe that while such a "marriage" has its problems and challenges, lay ministry and professional ministry can be blended into a beautiful partnership.

¹John Knox, "The Ministry in the Primitive Church," Ch. 1 in The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, ed. H. Richard Niebuhr and Daniel D. Williams (New York: Harper and Bros. Publishing, 1956), p. 23.

Historical Background

In order to understand the relationship of lay ministry to monoepiscopacy we need to take a brief look in church history and discover how monoepiscopacy developed. Again we go back to the book of Acts and the early church.

As we learned above, local church elders were selected for each of the local areas where believers had been established (Acts 14:23). These elders served as the pastors of the churches along with the apostles (1 Pet 5:1-3) and apparently under their supervision.¹ In Acts 20 we read of Paul calling the elders of the church to him and addressing them in vss. 18-35. In vs. 28 he stressed their dual work as shepherds and overseers: "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [ἐπισκοπούς], to shepherd [ποιμαίνειν] the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

This chapter is interesting and important because it refers in a combined sense to the work of the elders (πρεσβυτέρους) as that of both an overseer and a shepherd. The unity of the three terms πρεσβύτερος, ἐπισκοπός, and ποιμήν is uniquely and clearly implied here. But later in Titus 1:5-7 we see two of the terms again used interchangeably:

. . . Appoint elders [πρεσβυτέρους] in every church as I directed you, namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer [ἐπισκοπὸν] must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered. . . .

¹Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:388.

So it appears that the elders in the NT period were the same as the bishops in serving as the pastors of local churches on a day-to-day basis. (Apostles also used the terms *πρεσβυτερος* and *επισκοπος* as descriptive of their pastoral work--1 Pet 5:1; Acts 1:20). Though not all church historians see these titles as representing the same office in the early church, all are forced to acknowledge the fact that the Bible clearly does seem to use them interchangeably in the above texts.¹ As Shepherd says: "There are a number of passages that appear to make the offices of elder [*πρεσβυτερος*] and bishop [*επισκοπος*] synonymous."²

Now as time went on, an apparently gradual change took place in the leadership pattern of the church in that some of the elders began to be distinguished from other elders as having special coordinative and administrative authority. That is to say, some of the elders began to take on a supervisory role above other elders. In time the term *επισκοπος* or overseer was used to mark this distinction. Now some feel that an early NT example of this developing concept is seen in the apparent leadership of James among the elders at Jerusalem (Acts 21:18). It is very likely that each local Christian fellowship had an elder with some coordinative leadership even in the earliest days. It seems logical, however, that this idea of placing coordinative responsibility in the hands of select leaders became even more highly developed as the apostles along with the

¹Knox, The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, p. 21.

²"Elder in the N.T.," 2:74.

supervision they had provided, one by one, passed from the scene.

Certainly with the operations of the various congregations becoming more complex and greater demands being placed on leaders, there was a need to sustain unity and efficiency. It may have been helpful to have had a single leader to look to for overall direction and supervision. There are those who believe that this may have been particularly important since the church was facing increasing persecution from the state and more vigorous harassment by gnostic teachers who were introducing erroneous theories.¹ There may have been a need to have someone in place of the apostles speak for the church as an authority figure in guarding and preserving the faith.

Tracing the development of this monoepiscopal system as it slowly evolved out of the organization of the early NT church presents problems.² There is no precise record of the transition until we come to the early part of the second century and the writings of Ignatius, (not later than 117 A.D.).³ But in the writings of Ignatius, who was considered a prophet and bishop of the church of Antioch in Syria, we find testimony that a number of Asian churches by this time had single rulers or bishops. John Knox says:

The first witness to it [monoepiscopacy] is Ignatius . . . he had occasion to write a number of brief letters, especially to the churches of Asia which had sent deputations to visit and befriend him; and these letters . . . reveal, not only that Ignatius was the single bishop of Antioch, but also that the several churches of Asia--at Ephesus, Magnesia,

¹Knox, The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, p. 24.

²Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:389.

³M. H. Shepherd, "Bishop," Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (1962), 1:441.

Philadelphia,¹ Smyrna, and elsewhere--had likewise single rulers. . . .

It appears that the bishops from this time on came more and more to be considered as separate from and above the elders.

It is first in Ignatius, and after him wherever the monarchical episcopate is firmly established, that the elders become clearly distinguished from the² bishop, second after him in rank in the church's hierarchy.

Now there are some who, like Sohm and Lowrie, have pressed for the acceptance of the idea that originally there was a distinction between elders and bishops. Bishops were elders, but elders with special liturgical, pastoral, and economic functions, suggesting that bishop-elders had always carried greater authority than ordinary elders.³ In my view this theory does not fit the Biblical evidence or the testimony of early church history nearly as well as Lightfoot's, which is the other primary theory on the development of the monoepiscopate. He says that originally "bishops" and "elders" were the same, but that the idea of having ruling bishops developed gradually as individual elders were elevated to positions of higher leadership and responsibility from among the elders. Over a period of time a separate and new order of leadership developed in the form of the "bishop."⁴

We know for sure that by the early part of the second century the idea of having a single leader recognized as the head pastor and

¹The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, p. 23.

²Shepherd, "Elder in the N.T.," 2:74.

³Shepherd, "Christian Ministry," 3:391.

⁴Ibid.

leader in a Christian community is established. The concept spread rapidly as Knox has noted:

. . . whatever the causes of it or the process by which it came about, or however different these may have been in different parts of the church, monoepiscopacy was firmly established in most churches before the end of the second century and by the end of the third century prevailed everywhere.

At first these "bishops" or head pastors were apparently in charge of individual local churches, or perhaps of several little "house churches" in a community, but later the bishop in many churches came to be a kind of "area superintendent," especially in the second and third centuries.² While not every church moved in the direction of making the bishop an area administrator, nearly all churches came to accept the monoepiscopal principle of having a single leader as the highest ranking spiritual leader in each church community, and this has been maintained for centuries as a valid adjustment to the administrative structure of the Christian church. Even the Reformation which was critical of the priesthood and the administration of the church did not question the monoepiscopal principle.³ Seward Hiltner has observed:

From the early part of the second century onward there have been only rare deviations from the notion that a local Christian community should have a general overseer, by whatever name he might be called. This is the principle that we still use in Protestantism about the ordained minister.⁴

¹The Ministry in Historical Perspectives, p. 23.

²Hiltner, Ferment in the Ministry, p. 36.

³Ibid., p. 37.

⁴Ibid., p. 36.

Present Prospects

So the vast majority of Protestant churches today have accepted this concept of having a single leader, or pastor, in charge of each local church unit. Usually this person is a full-time, paid professional of the church. In most churches this professional leader has come to be relied upon so heavily that many churches do not take as seriously as the Early Church the idea of lay pastoral ministry. There clearly has been a tendency to rely on the "professional" pastor. Some have retained the concept of the local elder, but in most cases the elder does not really function in any serious pastoral capacity such as a true lay minister. Jock Stein accurately characterizes the current scene:

There is in the average congregation a great gulf fixed between the 'minister' and the rest, whether elders or 'ordinary' members. Only a very exceptional elder will think of his ministry as a Christian ministry.

Christianity has delegated the responsibility for pastoral care, and other vital services within the church, more and more to the professional pastor. In doing this it has grossly ignored the NT model God has given us and has drifted from the principle of "mutual ministry" clearly laid down in Scripture. Once again Weber's strong statement seems appropriate in confronting current attitudes and practices on this issue: ". . . too often the laity delegate their ministry to one man--the clergyman. This one man show is deeply unbiblical."²

¹Ministries of the 1980s, p. 46.

²Salty Christians, p. 17.

The tendency in recent times has been to restrict responsibility more narrowly to the few. Pastoral teams have given way to the "single pastor" mode. Because one pastor must be shared by the many who make up a typical congregation, people begin to feel that they really do not have a pastor. Consequently, many pastors feel ineffective and churches sometimes feel poorly shepherded. There is a desperate need to share church leadership with capable laymen in order to more realistically and sensibly spread the load.

But can change come? Can a level of lay ministry take place as long as the monoepiscopal system of leadership exists? This is the question raised at the beginning of this chapter. This is the issue that must be answered. In my view, a revival can take place within the present system and lay pastoral leadership can operate in the monoepiscopal system. This is based on my conviction that there are churches which are committed to emulate the Biblical pattern once they understand it. If they are given an opportunity to take a fresh look into history, they will see the key role played by lay pastoral ministry and they will be inspired to restore it. They will also come to understand the original role of monoepiscopacy. Church history certainly features monoepiscopal leadership as having originally developed not as a replacement for lay ministry but to provide supervision and coordination for both lay and full-time pastoral ministry wherever it existed. A kind of pastoral supervision was apparently first carried out by the apostles in working with local lay elders (Acts 20:17). But apostolic supervision always upheld the dignity of the local elder and supported

lay ministry as a genuine ministry (1 Pet 5:1-3). Apostles did not try to confine authority to themselves but spread that pastoral duty among many others (Acts 14:20-23). When, in time, bishops came to take the place of the apostles and were recognized as supervising pastors, they had a group of elders to work with. Supervision implied a leadership role in relationship to others. Those "others" were other pastors. Monoepiscopal leadership in the earliest period of the church implied the existence of other elders in the early church who shared pastoral responsibility with their supervising associates as partners and team members.

If a good contemporary model of dynamic lay pastoral ministry were established and activated, it could capture the imagination of many Christian churches and encourage a revival of lay ministry.

Opportunities in the S.D.A. Church

We come now to consider the possibilities of lay pastoral ministry in the setting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Adventist context is especially important to me since this project is to be carried out within the Adventist framework. The prospect of conducting successful lay ministry programs in the Adventist Church buoys me up because of my conviction that Adventism today offers a favorable climate. The Adventist Church surely provides, in some ways, a unique field of opportunity for laymen to carry out lay pastoral ministry.

Reasons for Optimism

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has accepted the idea of monoepiscopal leadership along with its rich Protestant heritage. Of course this leadership has been shaped to fit the needs of the world-wide, evangelically oriented membership. In the Seventh-day Adventist Church each local congregation is under the direction of a supervising pastor. The church tends, however, to retain the term "elder" rather than "bishop" in referring to the pastor. Usually he is recognized as a full-time, professional employee of the church. He is normally recognized by a special ordination that denotes a broader work and greater organizational authority than the "special ministry" ordination featured in the experience of the NT local elders. This ordination implies also a work of supervision and coordination in relation to the local pastoral team of elders. The pastor is clearly delegated as the leader of the church. His ordination is also seen as implying responsibility for gospel services in a world-wide context rather than a strictly local one. While he must be licensed by a specific governing body of the church, he may carry out an active ministry around the world by virtue of this ordination. He is responsible to open up the work in new areas and has ecclesiastical authority to baptize and represent the church in an official capacity. This is made clear by the following official statements published by the General Conference of S.D.A.s:

By virtue of his ordination to the ministry he is qualified to function in all church rites and ceremonies. He should

be the spiritual leader and advisor of the church.¹

Workers who are ordained to the gospel ministry are set apart to serve the world church, primarily as pastors and preachers of the Word. . . .²

Ordination to the ministry [special, full-time ministry] is the setting apart of a person to a sacred calling, not for one local field alone but for the entire church.³

This ordination appears to be similar to the apostolic ordination of Paul and Barnabas as quoted earlier. Ellen White suggests:

Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority. . . .⁴

The Adventist position amounts to a high view of the monoepiscopal pastoral ministry. Again it seems to blend together the idea of being a supervisory elder or bishop on the local level with the apostolic role of being responsible to open up the work in new areas, baptizing and organizing new churches.

This high view of the monoepiscopal ministry is appropriate in my view, but now we must come to the question regarding its compatibility with the concept of lay pastoral ministry in the Adventist Church. It was suggested earlier that the Seventh-day Adventist

¹General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual (Washington, D.C.: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1981), p. 183.

²General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Manual for Ministers (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1977), p. 16.

³Ibid.

⁴The Acts of the Apostles, p. 161.

Church offers special opportunities for lay pastoral ministry despite the fact that it would have to be carried out in partnership with monoepiscopacy. Now we would like to suggest six reasons for this optimism.

Existing Structure. First of all, the Seventh-day Adventist Church happens to already have an existing model for lay pastoral ministry in the role and office of its local church elder. The church has attempted to duplicate substantially the organizational structure of the early church. It has with a certain sense of pride featured the fact that it has remained close to the biblical pattern. In establishing a team of lay elders in each of its churches around the world, it has attempted to reflect this basic conviction. Consequently we have elders who essentially reflect the profile of the NT elder. The official Church Manual has clearly stated how to ordain and use elders in the church. Our practices have been shaped largely by the NT pattern. In fact, some eight pages of the Church Manual are devoted to the office of the elder.¹ The qualifications of the Adventist elder are exactly as outlined in the NT, and his responsibilities are of a broad pastoral nature as were those of the early church. The Church Manual says:

The elder should, in counsel with the minister, carry much of the pastoral responsibility, visiting the church members, ministering to the sick, and encouraging those who are disheartened. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on this part of an elder's work. As an undershepherd he should exercise

¹Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, pp. 81-88.

a constant vigilance over the flock for which he is responsible.

The importance of this lay ministry is highlighted as the office of elder is referred to as the second highest in the church, next to the office of supervising pastor: "In the work and organization of the church, if a pastor has not been provided by the conference or mission, the office of elder ranks as the highest and most important."² Again it is said of him/her:

The elder should be capable of conducting services of the church. It is not always possible for the conference to supply ministerial help for all the churches; consequently the elder must be prepared to minister in word and doctrine.

Under the pastor and in the absence of a pastor, not only is the local elder a spiritual leader of the church, he is responsible⁴ for fostering all branches and departments of the work.

He/she is also said to be responsible for fostering the world-wide outreach of the church by encouraging the local members to be supportive. He/she is to work with the local conference in promoting church activities, helping supervise the election of delegates to conference sessions, assisting other officers to be effective in carrying out their duties, and helping give direction to the financing of the local church operation.⁵

Clearly the elder is given a position of great responsibility. The church's guidelines as expressed in the Church Manual clearly outline a very close relationship of cooperation and

¹Ibid., p. 84.

²Ibid., p. 81.

³Ibid., p. 82.

⁴Ibid., p. 84.

⁵Ibid., pp. 86, 87.

partnership between the elder lay pastors and the supervising pastor. There is even a strong word of caution that pastors should not usurp all of the pastoral leadership but freely share it with their elders:

. . . an ordained minister . . . as a pastor of a church, . . . should be considered as the ranking officer, and the local elder as his assistant. Their work is closely related; they should therefore work together harmoniously. The minister should not gather to himself all lines of responsibility, but should share these with the local elder. . . .¹ The pastoral work of the church should be shared by both.

The profile that surfaces in viewing the local elder and his/her pastoral duties from the viewpoint of the S.D.A. Church Manual is that he/she is:

1. A part-time pastor. He/she pursues a secular career and lifework in addition to his/her church responsibilities.
2. A non-church-employed pastor. Presently in the Adventist Church there are times when elders have been given a small expense budget for substantial travel costs, etc. (primarily as a reimbursement for actual expenses).
3. A pastor without formal theological education. He/she may have achieved high educational levels in other fields but is not required to have special training in theology.
4. A pastor that primarily serves the local congregation and area. In some cases, church elders may be asked to serve in more than one church at a time. He/she must, however, be separately voted into leadership by each local church. The work is limited to those local areas where the office has been formally given. Leadership in each church is renewable each year.²

¹Ibid., p. 84.

²Ibid., p. 83.

5. A pastor with significant leadership authority. As outlined earlier the responsibility to give leadership and encouragement to "all branches and departments of the work"¹ is specified. Working with the pastor he/she may conduct communion, lead out in business meetings, chair the church board, conduct the services of the church, preach and do evangelism.

6. A pastor restricted from carrying out some ecclesiastical functions. He/she may not perform the legal act of marriage or ordain deacons or elders. He/she usually does not baptize unless special circumstances arise and arrangements are made with the conference office.²

Because of this already existing structure for lay pastoral ministry in the office of the local elder, I believe lay pastoral ministry can be made to thrive and even expand within the Adventist Church.

Pastors Need Help. The second reason for optimism regarding the future of lay pastoral ministry in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that supervising, full-time, professional pastors are being sorely taxed with responsibility and are in desperate need of help. Pastors are asking for lay assistance. In fact their lack of success in mobilizing lay leadership within the church has been a source of agonizing frustration. I have personally had many occasions to discuss this matter of lay leadership with pastors in various areas of the Columbia Union Conference of S.D.A.s over the past twelve

¹Ibid., p. 84.

²Ibid., pp. 82-85.

years and have found a unanimous desire to more effectively tap lay leadership.

Many pastors in this area as well as in others are assigned the responsibility of supervising two and even three churches at the same time. It is impossible to accomplish this without the assistance of lay leaders who substantially participate in lay pastoral ministry. Many pastors are like the early apostles who had the individual responsibility of giving guidance to a host of churches. They simply could not have given prolonged personal attention to each of these churches and fostered a strong outreach without the assistance of their local lay pastor counterparts--the elders! Those lay leaders, as we have already discovered, shouldered a primary share of the responsibility for the operation of those local churches. Contemporary pastors also need to be able to rely substantially on lay leaders for assistance in caring for the health of their churches. After personally pastoring in various settings, including districts of one, two, and three churches, I am aware of the stresses that are put on a pastor in multiple-church districts. The expectations placed on men in these situations are often very unrealistic and have tragic results. More and more we hear discussions about "ministerial burnout" and "family problems" when talking about ministers. In part, this is due to the tremendous pressures we place on pastors, combined with the fact that pastors are not developing and using the potentially strong lay leadership that is generally available to them in their churches. In trying to carry the demanding burdens of pastoral ministry alone, professional ministers are

placing themselves in danger of destroying their health, spiritual life, family, and, in my view, are holding back the growth of their churches!

The problem of stress placed on ministers is not unique in the S.D.A. Church by any means, but the problem is severely exacerbated in the Adventist Church by the fact that pastors are frequently assigned to more than one church. If a pastor had a strong and active lay pastoral support team in each of those churches to which he/she is assigned, the picture surely could be very different.

In 1980 and 1981 a survey of S.D.A. pastors in North America was taken by the Andrews University Institute of Church Ministry under the sponsorship of the Ministerial/Stewardship Association of the General Conference of S.D.A.s. The theme of the survey was "The Pastor as Person and Husband." One of the reasons for this survey was the growing feeling that the morale of the Adventist pastor has been slowly diminishing. This survey attempted to address this specific issue of morale in the Adventist ministry. Ministry, a magazine designed primarily for Adventist ministers, published a very interesting report on this survey which is pertinent to our discussion. It clearly states the problem to be addressed:

There is a concern that in recent years pastoral morale has been slipping and that pastoral ministry no longer holds the challenge and fulfillment that it once did. Of course there are still many pastors who love their work. . . . But for an increasing number, the flame that once lighted their vision has flickered, burned low, or gone out. They find their daily routine to be drudgery. They have not found the success needed to fulfill their own expectations or those of their conference administrations. They feel a sense of failure and guilt. Some are hoping for "promotion" into departmental or administrative work. Some seek a transfer

to a teaching position. Others are simply leaving the ministry for secular callings. Many feel trapped. . . .

When the survey results were gathered, tabulated, and evaluated there was much reason for encouragement. The overall morale of Adventist ministers seemed to be better than anticipated. Some 94 percent of the pastors indicated that they "really enjoy being a pastor." On the other hand, some facts were brought to light that indicate that beneath the surface of the more positive figures are some areas of significant concern. For example:

34 percent feel that they might not meet the approval of their superiors in the conference office, 21 percent hope to be "promoted" to some other form of ministry . . . 58 percent sometimes feel a loneliness and isolation in the ministry. Another 28 percent sometimes feel as if they would like to leave the pastoral ministry, and 33 percent have discussed the possibility of a transfer with their wives.²

So while many ministers have been generally coping well with the demands of ministry, a substantial number are facing issues and tensions that could undermine their future outlook and effectiveness. To have 33 percent of the pastors going so far as to discuss transferring to another line of work indicates that roughly one in three are not entirely satisfied with their work as pastors. This should lead us to be concerned about the areas of ministry that particularly are stressful and of concern to the pastors. The survey did give opportunity for pastors to identify "areas of frustration and disappointment," and the results should cause us to sit up and take

¹Roger L. Dudley, Des Cummings Jr., and Greg Clark, "Morale in Ministry--A Study of the Pastor as a Person," Ministry 54, December 1981, p. 5.

²Ibid., p. 6.

notice. Some of the results have a direct bearing on the issue of lay ministry in the church. For example, the frustration that was ranked at the top of the list was failure in "motivation of laity for ministry, responsibility, discipling, or leadership," with a 22 percent response. The frustration ranked second was due to "administrative work," which received a 17 percent response. These two areas, in other words, contributed more to the negative side of ministry than any other! It should be obvious that both of these frustrations could be greatly relieved if every pastor had a core of active lay pastors who were responsive in providing leadership and nurture in the church. Laymen would be involved and administrative burdens would be shared! The report suggests the following in light of these figures:

The greatest areas of frustration and disappointment in the ministry concern motivating and involving members and being overwhelmed with administrative trivia. Pastors need help in the form of guidance and resources that will enable them to motivate and mobilize their members to accomplish the mission of the church and to relieve the pastor of¹ most of the maintenance ministries of the local congregation.

The question is, How long will we wait before we seriously address the issue of providing lay pastoral assistance for professional Adventist pastors, and the training necessary to help them motivate and develop lay ministry? We really cannot afford to wait any longer. The issues at stake are too important, the hour in history too late, and the opportunity too great!

¹Ibid., p. 9.

Members Need Better Care. The third reason for optimism regarding lay pastoral ministry in the Adventist Church focuses on the needs of the people. People desperately need a broader-based pastoral care system than we presently provide. We need to more effectively maintain church members in good spiritual, physical, and emotional health. We also need to develop a caring system in the church that actually accelerates the evangelistic "pull" that Biblical teachings provide for those currently outside the church. We can help bring people into the church by loving them in. A strong support team of lay pastors can help the pastor and the general membership create a climate of care, nurture, and fellowship.

The professional minister is responsible for carrying out many duties in his multi-faceted work. It is not difficult to imagine him getting so busy that he is often not able to maintain the kind of visitation program that he and his members are happy with. Also meeting the needs of people when they are in crisis--facing the death of a loved one, sickness, marital problems, or depression--is "problematic" when the total burden for this kind of care is exclusively assigned to the professional minister.

Based on the responses of hundreds of Adventist members personally visited over the past decade, I find that many people have gone without a visit from a professional pastor for years! Some could not recall the last time a pastor or member of the pastoral team had visited, and some were sure they had never received such a visit following their baptism!

Recently, and only recently, we have begun seriously to

analyze the issue of pastoral care as it affects the health of the Adventist Church family. We find that a loving, caring, fellowship-rich environment is essential to the vitality and endurance of the church. Edward Turner throws out this challenge regarding pastoral care from the Adventist perspective:

. . . the Seventh-day Adventist Church has demonstrated the most consistent growth pattern of any other church. For this we indeed are grateful! But, as Oosterwal has reminded us, unprecedented church growth may well be followed by mass apostasy. . . . There are some disturbing factors which we must face if we are to remedy our current problems . . . research by Oosterwal, et al., indicates that issues clustering around "care" and "community" are some of the most significant factors in patterns of church growth. Conversely, increased apostasy rates appear to have a direct correlation to the lack of care and concern on the part of the people of God. . . . There are also strong indicators that people tend to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church more out of a sense of belonging than the appeal of doctrinal purity. Conversely, they also leave the church when they no longer feel loved and cared for by the community of faith.¹

In the report entitled Patterns of S.D.A. Church Growth in North America, published in 1976, Gottfried Oosterwal pointed out some interesting things relative to the attitude of members in North America. One of the areas of particular interest has to do with members' reasons for "lack of spiritual commitment." Oosterwal noted that in middle-sized churches (100-350 members), the reasons most frequently given were: "need for better ministers, better preaching, more pastoral care, better leadership." Notice that "more pastoral care" was an issue! In smaller churches (99 or fewer), the reasons most frequently listed were "lack of pastoral care, nurture and

¹Gottfried Oosterwal, Russel L. Staples, Walter B. T. Douglas, Edward Turner, Servants for Christ: The Adventist Church Facing the 80's (Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1980), pp. 140, 141.

leadership."¹ Again pastoral care comes through as a vitally felt need.

The need is indeed great for a more effective and wider pastoral care system in the churches. I fully believe that if each church had a trained and enthusiastic group of elders who were serving as lay pastors, the people's needs could be met through their lay nurturing as a complement to that of the professional pastor. This is an urgent issue, as Turner suggests: ". . . one wonders what impact a strong program of pastoral care by the 'people of God' might have had on the 80,000 people who left the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1977!"²

Church Heritage Supports It. A fourth reason for optimism is that there is a rich heritage in the Adventist Church supportive of lay ministry in all phases of gospel work. The church began as a lay movement. The Baptist lay preacher William Miller created a climate of Bible study and fellowship out of which lay Adventist pioneers developed. Those early Adventist founders like Joseph Bates, James and Ellen White, and others were laymen! Since those early days, the church has continued to uphold the work of the so-called laity as vital.

The church has a "lay activities" department devoted specifically to encouraging and equipping laymen for service and outreach. We have sponsored lay witnessing programs, written books, and

¹(Berrien Springs, Michigan: Andrews University Press, 1976), p. 30.

²Oosterwal et al., Servants for Christ, p. 143.

preached sermons that have stressed lay service through the years. Ellen White exercised what the church believes to be a "prophetic" ministry as a layperson in the church. Her respected writings have helped encourage a strong emphasis of lay ministry through the years. For example, she wrote in 1896: "Laymen can minister. It is their privilege to lay hold of divine power with one hand, and with the other to reach forth to save humanity."¹ Then in 1901: "If the ministers would get out of the way, if they would go forth into new fields, the members would be obliged to bear responsibilities, and their capabilities would increase by use."²

Our past emphasis on lay ministry, then, should make it rich soil for the development of an even stronger contemporary movement of lay ministry in the area of pastoral leadership.

Laymen Want an Active Role. The fifth reason for optimism regarding lay pastoral ministry in the Adventist Church is that the laity are currently asking for greater participation and representation in the operation of the church. More and more we hear of lay representatives who appeal for a greater voice and role. In constituency sessions, conference executive committee meetings, and local church boards laymen speak up and are heard. It is time to take them seriously. They are wanting to ask questions and give input on all levels and rightly so!

¹"The Spirit of Sacrifice," The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald 73, no. 41 (October 13, 1896), p. 1.

²Ellen G. White, Evangelism (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), p. 382.

A move toward emphasizing lay pastoral ministry would be a particular response to this appeal of the laity for a greater place in the ministry and administration of the church. I fully expect that when they are approached in an intelligent, respectful, and informed manner, talented laypersons will be enthusiastically responsive to the idea of lay pastoral ministry.

Finances Demand It. A sixth and final reason we dare not ignore is the financial advantage of non-church employed or part-time employed lay pastors. In this current economic crisis we are forced to be sensitive to the financing of God's work. The Adventist Church is going through the throes of economic uncertainty and hard times as are all other churches.

At the present time many conferences in the North American Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church are being forced to reduce their full-time ministerial staff, as well as office personnel. This means that supervising pastors are responsible, in some cases, for additional churches. Already some pastors who had only one church have been given two, and some with two now are in charge of three. This will almost certainly accentuate the pressures mentioned earlier that are causing frustration for some Adventist pastors.

The present economic climate urges, perhaps even demands, that the Church implement on a wide scale a renewed emphasis on lay pastoral leadership and even develop some new and creative ways of cultivating it. If churches had a team of trained elders committed to lay pastoral ministry because it really was necessary financially

and otherwise, the elders would likely be successful when teamed up with a quality supervising pastor who knew how to use and enlarge their skills. Ministerial budgets could be cut with less detriment to the work. Perhaps it would be healthy to cut ministerial budgets even if there were no financial crisis, in order that some funds could be channeled into lay-training programs and the work load be effectively shared and carried out. The result might be that the church would be more effectively nurtured and, therefore, prepared for outreach, which, in turn, would lead to the expanding of the church and the opening up of work in new areas. This could mean the establishment of new churches and would provide a constant need for new supervising pastors as well as newly trained laymen!

Challenges

After having given a defense of the opportunity for lay pastoral ministry in the Adventist Church, I must also acknowledge that there are challenges to be faced. In principle and in theory the church is very supportive of lay ministry. However it has sometimes fallen short in giving its heartiest practical support. In honesty we have let the prestige of the work of the lay pastor slip to a much lower level than it should be. More and more the elder is a token leader who sits on the platform during worship services, offers prayer, helps call for the offering, and reads scripture. He perhaps gives counsel at important church meetings, but in most churches he rarely assumes substantial pastoral responsibility for visiting and counseling members, for evangelistic outreach, and for teaching. There are always some exceptions to this, but it is generally

recognized that many elders are not really putting their shoulder to the load in carrying out a balanced and complete pastoral ministry as described by the Church Manual.

We have not completely, but partially, succumbed to the temptation to stress the role of the supervising pastor to the extent that we have begun to denigrate the category of lay "special ministry" as modelled by the NT elders. We have also drifted slightly from the original view maintained by the early Adventist Church. We have tended to modify the authority and responsibility placed on the local elder in our official statements. While these changes are minimal they do indicate a direction that can be potentially damaging to lay ministry. In 1974, Clinton Shankel did a comparative study of the officially published lists of duties for local church elders in the Adventist Church. He compared the first officially published list of duties highlighted in the Advent Review and Sabbath Herald of June 26, 1883, and the list of duties published in the S.D.A. Church Manual of 1971. He concluded:

First, the local church elder in the original concept served like our present pastors. Second, the local elder apparently was primarily responsible to the church, whereas, later he becomes responsible more to the pastor and conference. . . . There is a definite tightening of control over the local church elder. Third, the local church elder did perform, in the early days of organization, some duties that have now been given to others in the church, such as the handling of names for transfer of membership. In conclusion, it seems that the local church elder has largely maintained his position in the church and his right to function in different capacities. The major difference is central control which seems to come as an organization grows and becomes more elaborately organized . . . thus requiring a shift from local elder-run churches to pastor-run churches with elders as assistants.

The original concept of the role of local church elder in the Seventh-day Adventist Church seems to be very similar to the concept held by the New Testament church--a concept that allowed the ministers freedom to do evangelism and raise up new churches. The present concept seems to tie up the pastors with more of the duties of the local church.

It seems to me that the shift that Shankel refers to has gone too far in terms of its practical implications in the local church. Truly the present setting does "tie up" the pastor in a negative sense. And it has sadly reduced the participation of lay pastoral ministry.

The full-time, world-wide ministry of supervising pastors should not be exalted to the place where local elders feel that their office is merely a token recognition of lay pastoral ministry. Lay pastoral ministry should be taken seriously as it was in the NT. The apostles relied to a large degree on the local elders of that era, and if we want supervising pastors to reflect the apostolic pattern, we should also strongly encourage them to duplicate the apostolic way of delegating responsibility to local lay shepherds. The Adventist church presently acknowledges the importance of the local elder as a kind of lay pastor. It has incorporated lay pastors into its organizational plan in the form of church elders and proclaimed them as an integral part of the body. Theoretically, the church is on target in doing this, but when it comes to the practice of genuine lay pastoral ministry it should be even stronger than it is.

If four simple steps are taken, the Adventist Church can help

¹Clinton Shankel, "Field Test of an Instructional Program for Local Church Elders" (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1974), p. 39.

multiply even further the opportunities for lay pastoral ministry:

- (1) Educate elders regarding the implications of their pastoral responsibilities and provide effective on-the-job training for them on a continuing basis.
- (2) Re-educate the church membership about the nobility, sanctity, and necessity of the lay ministry carried out by church elders.
- (3) Open up a dialogue among supervising pastors regarding this issue and challenge them to begin uplifting the role of the elder as a legitimate pastoral ministry before the general membership and in their own personal interaction with the elders.
- (4) Prepare supervising pastors to carry out an equipping ministry that includes lay pastors.

Despite the problems faced by the Adventist Church, I strongly believe the time is ripe for lay pastoral ministry to be reasserted.¹ Again, the fact that church organization and structure has already provided a place for lay pastoral ministry means that there is reason to believe it can be made more meaningful and be implemented on a wider and more active scale.

¹The Pennsylvania Conference of S.D.A.s has recently completed the first year of a promising experimental training program for lay pastors under the coordinative leadership of pastor Monte Sahlin. In preparation for the development of the present lay pastors seminar, I have given special study to this emerging Adventist training model along with non-S.D.A. models offered by Robert Schuller at the Crystal Cathedral (Garden Grove, California), and by James Garlow in his book, Partners in Ministry. I have identified key elements in these three models which I feel can contribute to the success of lay-training programs within the Adventist context. See Appendix B, pp. 204-206.

CHAPTER IV

PREPARING LAY PASTORS FOR SERVICE

The Shepherd Pattern

As we consider the issue of preparing laymen for service, we need to consider the pattern that we are aiming to reproduce. That is, there must be a role profile that we are hoping to develop in the candidate for lay ministry. This chapter looks at that profile for lay pastors and breaks it down into basic parts so that we might understand clearly what our goals are in the training process.

There is perhaps no clearer way to visualize the role and specific duties of a pastor-teacher than to think of the work of a shepherd dealing with his sheep. The imagery of a shepherd tending his flock is rich with significance since the word "pastor" is translated from the Greek word, ποιμην, which literally means: "one who tends flocks, a shepherd, or herdsman."¹ ποιμην is used once in the NT (Eph 4:11) to refer to leaders as shepherds or "pastors" in the context of the "pastor-teacher" gift.² But where it is used elsewhere in the NT, it consistently stresses the pastoral idea of care and responsibility for either literal or symbolic sheep.

This shepherd model is equally applicable, whether describing

¹Harper's Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 333.

²Joachim Jeremias, "ποιμην," Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (1968), 6:497.

the work of the "full-time" pastor or the "lay" pastor, in the sense that it reflects basic pastoral duties. Both the professional pastor and the lay pastor are responsible for pastoral services needed by a congregation. As we look at the work of a shepherd or pastor, we see that his/her work is very broad! This is what makes pastoral care particularly challenging.

First, there is leadership. Acts 20:28 says: ". . . the Holy Spirit has made you overseers . . ." (cf. 1 Pet 5:3, 4). A shepherd is first a leader who influences his sheep to make positive decisions that vitally affect their destiny. He is responsible for leading them in safe paths, and for encouraging them to follow him to the extent that he follows the "Chief Shepherd," Jesus Christ (Heb 13:20). He is to instill confidence and trust by his faithful example. He is also to see himself as a manager of the resources of the flock in giving guidance, counsel, and administrative direction. All should be done with the idea that efficiency and success brings glory to God.

Second, there is the responsibility of feeding God's people. As Jesus said to Peter, "Tend [or feed] my sheep . . ." (John 21:17). This has to do not only with making sure God's people have enough to eat literally, but refers to a spiritual feeding--feeding the saints the "Word of God," which is every bit as crucial as physical "bread." This points to the shepherd's teaching and preaching responsibilities as a communicator of the Word (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 4:2). He is responsible for offering spiritual nutrition to those under his charge. They need a wholesome, balanced diet. If a pastor

starves his flock they may die spiritually. This "feeding" is central to the work of the pastor, as Ellen White points out:

There is a wide field for the elders and the helpers in every church. They are to feed the flock of God with pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from the chaff, the poisonous mixture of error. You who have any part to act in the church of God, be sure that you act wisely in feeding the flock of God; for its prosperity much depends upon the quality of this food.

Third, there is the work of guardianship. Paul cautions: ". . . savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; . . . therefore be on the alert . . ." (Acts 20:29, 31). This calls for a pastor to protect his people from error and from false shepherds that would do them harm. By persuasive reasoning from scripture he is to warn his people of spiritual danger. He is to present "sound doctrine" so powerfully that error will be exposed. In this he expresses love and concern for his flock's eternal destiny.

Fourth, the shepherd is responsible for comforting the wounded and hurting. "'Comfort, O comfort My people,' says your God" (Isa 40:1). "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt 11:28). We can imagine the shepherd caring for the hurts and bruises of his sheep at the end of each day. He pours soothing oil on the wounds while speaking words of encouragement to those in pain. This is the way the spiritual shepherd must carry out his/her work in counseling and offering hope to those who have experienced trouble. Those with emotional bruises and physical afflictions he leads to the divine Comforter!

¹"A Wide Field for Church Leaders" [1 Pet 5:2, 3], SDA Bible Commentary, 7:942.

Fifth, the shepherd has the responsibility of seeking the lost sheep.

What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? (Luke 15:4)

". . . I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also . . ." (John 10:16). The pastor has a dual responsibility--to claim the sheep that have drifted from the fold, that is, the backslidden, and to win those who have never known the fold of Christ, those who are outside the Christian church. In cases where the shepherd knows his sheep are in the fold of a false shepherd, he tries to rescue them by love and persuasive efforts.

This necessitates a strongly evangelistic pastor. He will extend an invitation to unite with God's "remnant" fold (Rev 18:4). His function also requires him to organize his flock for the purpose of befriending, witnessing to, and winning other sheep.

And sixth, the shepherd must train his sheep. Literal shepherds train their sheep to follow their commands. Sheep need to know when to lie down, when to follow, when to stop, when to press together when being attacked, etc. The pastor of a church also has a training responsibility. He is to assist members in the development of their spiritual gifts and in carrying out spiritual warfare. In Eph 4:11, 12 we are told this is one of the key functions of the pastor-teacher: "And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service. . . ." The minister's role is not merely to "keep" people with Christ. His

role is to "develop" them for Christ's service.

It seems logical that these six major duties of the shepherd or pastor can be separated into three broad categories of pastoral work! This can be helpful in getting a handle on pastoral responsibilities. We can classify most of what the pastor is expected to do under these three areas of ministry:

1. Administration: Giving direction to the church through wise leadership and supervision.

2. Nurture: Providing care for the church within the following four duties as outlined above--

feeding God's people--teaching and preaching

guardianship--maintaining, strengthening, building, protecting, and preserving those in the church

comforting the wounded and hurting--caring, helping, healing, counseling, restoring, encouraging, and loving believers

training--enabling members to discover and skillfully use their spiritual gifts, natural talents, and capacities; bringing about maturity through a productive life.

It is interesting that the American College Dictionary describes nurture as: "to feed, nourish, or support during the stages of growth . . . to bring up; train; educate. . . ."¹

3. Evangelism: Sharing one's faith in Christ, with the goal

¹"Nurture," American College Dictionary (1964), p. 833.

of bringing about an individual's salvation by his acceptance of Christ's redeeming grace and substitutionary death, implies the use of every available means in both a personal and public context.

Those who would be considered candidates for lay pastoral ministry need to be prepared for service in each of these areas of shepherd ministry. While particular capabilities may tend to make individuals strongest in one or two of these areas, lay pastors should ideally be trained to do at least satisfactory work in each of these. Every effort should be put forth to see to it that these lay pastors are true pastors in that they are "complete" pastors, with a healthy balance of pastoral skills. Ellen White suggests that those who serve as elder-pastors should be properly qualified:

May the Lord impress upon the minds and hearts of all connected with the sacred work of God, the importance of ascertaining whether those who are to minister as deacons and elders are suitable men to be entrusted with the flock of God.

If the pastor-teacher gift is genuinely evident in a candidate and training opportunities are provided, there is every reason to believe that successful lay pastoral service will be rendered.

The Church an Enabling Center

If lay pastoral ministry is to be carried out in the church with any degree of effectiveness, it is obvious that the church will need to provide an environment where training can take place. In fact the church will need to focus on the issue of training in the development of all spiritual gifts. Most definitely, when Eph 4:12

¹"Carefulness in Selecting Church Leaders" [1 Tim 3:1-13], SDA Bible Commentary, 7:914, 915.

speaks of "the equipping of the saints for the work of service . . . ," it implies that within the church there will be a clear process of preparing and educating members for individual ministry. The Church must become an enabling center where "gifted" people can sharpen their skills. This means that the local church needs to concentrate on this important function not in a "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude, but as a sacred and central issue.

This concept has been supported strongly by the literature of recent decades.¹ Fenhagen says:

The issue of lay education is of critical importance to the vitality of the local church and the integrity of its mission to the world . . . the local congregation has a primary responsibility to enable persons to discover and exercise the ministries they have been given.²

Gibbs and Morton, in God's Lively People, suggest that lay education, to an important degree, helps justify the very existence of a local church:

It is not enough just to be there. . . . It [the local church] is there to serve the people of the locality by acting its love and manifesting its faith and by offering to men the wonder of worship and the main purpose of its corporate life is to educate and sustain its members in their work in the world.³

For the Seventh-day Adventist Church the case is made even stronger by Ellen White's ringing appeal that "every church should

¹Mark Gibbs and T. Ralph Morton, God's Lively People (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 105.

²Fenhagen, Toward a Mutual Ministry, p. 113.

³Gibbs and Morton, God's Lively People, p. 130.

be a training school for Christian workers."¹ While there has been a tendency to swing between the two terms lay "education" and lay "training" as representing two separate images of lay enablement in the Christian world,² Ellen White feels comfortable using both:

It is by education and practice that persons are to be qualified to meet any emergency . . . and wise planning is needed to place each one in his proper sphere, that he may obtain an experience that will fit him to bear responsibility.³

In every church the members should be so trained⁴ that they will devote time to the winning of souls to Christ.

There was a time when many churches did not seem to recognize their responsibility to educate the laity in the use of their gifts. Primary emphasis was placed on the education and training of full-time, professional ministers. It was recognized that they needed a strong education in order to perform capably. But the conviction was not so clear in the case of laymen. "More recently, however, the church has begun to devote more explicit attention to equipping the worldly laity for their ministry in society."⁵ Training is essential for all the gifts as manifested in all of the people. The fact that a person carried out a secular occupation in addition to his work in the church should not make him unworthy of it.

We must believe that God cares equally for his truck drivers as for his Harvard professors, for his people who serve in

¹Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), p. 149.

²Gibbs and Morton, God's Lively People, p. 119.

³Testimonies, 9:221.

⁴Ibid., 6:436.

⁵Richard J. Mouw, Called to Holy Worldliness (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 17.

Woolworth's as for his people who design TV commercials; and we must believe this enough to work out methods of training for ordinary church members, techniques practical and concrete enough to serve their needs.

Churches seem to be moving slowly in the direction of providing this kind of an educational environment in the church, but there still are problems. Major churches often give mere lip service to the idea or offer a "kind of sentimental 'tokenism'" to it.² The problem in the eyes of some is a "simple refusal to face the questions of finance."³ Churches usually are reticent to budget adequate amounts of money necessary to provide staffing, facilities, and materials for lay education, which means it may still be low on the list of church priorities when compared to other areas of need.⁴ When economic problems arise, this area is prone to receive cuts. Churches certainly have to channel finances in this direction, and to sustain them even in hard times, if anything exciting is to take place.

The prospects offered by taking seriously the challenge of making local churches training bases should be enough to overcome all reluctance. Imagine what could take place if we took the following statements at face value:

The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them ⁵to work for God, and to depend on Him, not on the ministers.

¹Gibbs and Morton, God's Frozen People, p. 23.

²Gibbs and Morton, God's Lively People, p. 117.

³Ibid., pp. 116, 117.

⁴Ibid., p. 117.

⁵White, Testimonies, 7:19.

God expects His church to discipline and fit its members for the work of enlightening the world. An education should be given that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers valuable talents. By the use of these talents, men would be developed who would be prepared to fill positions of trust and influence . . . thus great good would be accomplished for the Master.

As the church seriously addresses the fact that it is responsible to provide an aggressive lay-training program for its people, it should do so on the basis of at least two presuppositions--as suggested by James Garlow, author of Partners in Ministry:

First, that the people of God exist for service for which they need training; and second, that those who train them are their servants, not their masters. When we talk about lay ministry training, we are not talking about persons who desire to lord their knowledge over those who do not know. Rather, we are talking about laypersons who want to be all God would have them to be and who need "enablers" or "equippers."²

The church that serves as a training center must recognize the fact that God often uses natural means to accomplish divine purposes! God has not chosen to prepare His people for service by miraculously enabling them. He uses the human channels of his church to bring this about. He does miraculously "gift" His people as he chooses, but intends that enablement largely be accomplished through human efforts which cooperate with the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:11, 12). In the enablement process, God brings man into partnership with Him, and human beings learn how to enrich the lives of others and, in turn, how to be enriched by others. The fundamental mutuality of all believers is thus further enhanced.

¹Ibid., 6:431, 432.

²Partners in Ministry: Laity and Pastors Working Together (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1981), p. 106.

The Teaching Pastor

It seems logical that the key person in guiding a local church toward fulfilling its purpose as a training center is the supervising pastor. He is not the only person but, in most cases, the primary person.

Enablers are usually pastors who can help them [laypersons] understand their call to ministry, discover their gifts for ministry, learn how to select that ministry, and provide some kind of training for that ministry.

The pastor is responsible for directing his energies and the energies of experienced workers in the church in the direction of lay enablement. He needs to do everything he can to set the stage for gift development. His gift as a pastor-teacher is given for the "equipping" of fellow believers (Eph 4:12). In fact, teaching should be emphasized in his ministry. Again the dual nature of his special gift prepares him for an effective teaching/training ministry. Statements from Ellen White uphold this strong Biblical emphasis on the teaching phase of pastoral ministry:

Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. . . . Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people. . . .²

The people have had too much sermonizing; but have they been taught how to labor for those for whom Christ died? Has a line of labor been devised and placed before them in such a way³ that each has seen the necessity of taking part in the work?

¹ Ibid.

² White, Testimonies, 7:18-20.

³ Ibid., 6:431.

But here lies a second challenge that is every bit as big as the financial one. It is tragic but many pastors have not adequately sensed their responsibility in the area of lay education or training. Weber says: "Too many clergy and other churchmen fail to fulfill--or even to see--their main specific function: the equipment of saints for the ministry."¹ A primary reason for this is that seminaries and Bible colleges have given little attention to lay training in the preparation of professional ministers until most recent times. Most pastors simply "have not received adequate training in how to train laypersons for their ministries."²

If, as is being suggested, the pastor-teacher really is pivotal in shaping the church's level of participation in lay training, we desperately need to cultivate change in the way professional pastors are prepared for ministry. It is vital that pastors become proficient in lay enablement along with others who have training, and that they understand their role as "trainers of ministers."³ Perhaps more thought should be given to suggestions made by individuals like Edwin Linberg regarding the profile of a professional enabling pastor. He suggests that successful lay training pastors are characterized by the following:

1. He or she is thoroughly knowledgeable and articulate concerning the various dimensions of ministry, biblically, theologically, and practically;
2. He or she is equipped with the skills necessary to involve persons in the processes of experiential learning;
3. He or she employs those skills as creatively as is possible in every situation, relationship, encounter, and activity in the life of the congregation

¹p. 17.

²Garlow, p. 116.

³Ibid., p. 109.

they serve, since every situation and relationship is a potential opportunity for learning and growth; 4. He or she sees the basic role of a professional minister being a "link" or "bridge" by which people move from intellectual and verbal assent to the idea that they are responsible for the ministry of Christ to the actual practice of their ministry in the world as God's people; and, 5. He or she disciplines the exercising of their ministry so that every phase of it is directed to increasing the ministry of the laity, thereby expanding the impact of Christ's ministry through the lives of others.

As suggested earlier, the implications of the church as a training center are great when considering lay pastoral ministry. The pastor-teacher gift as poured out on laymen along with other gifts in the church needs to be cultivated. As the church begins to faithfully function as an educational center, it should provide opportunities specifically for those with this gift to become mature in the exercise of their gift. Supervising pastors, in this context, would eagerly seek out those whom they can train to complement their work and follow in their footsteps. This will enhance their success, as was the case with Paul and Barnabas--"careful training of new converts was an important factor in the remarkable success that attended . . . as they preached the gospel."² At last a whole new army of workers would be made available to help "finish the work" as Christ has given it (Matt 28:19, 20), and the "harvest" (Matt 9:37) will be gathered in more successfully and more rapidly because the "few" have been transformed into "many!"

¹Edwin Carl Linberg, "An Examination of the Role of the Clergy as Enabler of the Development and Growth of the Ministry of the Laity" (D.Min. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, California, 1975), pp. 246, 247.

²White, Acts of the Apostles, pp. 186, 187.

Christ's Training Method

Likely questions raised at this point are, "After what do supervising pastors and others who have training gifts pattern such an enabling system within the church? What kind of enablement should the church be providing? What basic principles should be operative in terms of the approach used?" As always, Christ's life and ministry must be consulted. Certainly training or enabling was a hallmark of Jesus' own ministry. His dynamic approach to this most important function should be analyzed and applied to the training systems of the church by the training personnel. Only then can the church truly be a Christian training center.

I would like to suggest six of the most basic of these training principles. This is not to say that only six exist but, to me, they appear to represent a good starting point from which to view lay training.

First, there is selection! When Jesus was ready to train those who would become apostles in His infant church, he selected and then called twelve men, "He called His disciples to Him; and chose twelve of them, whom he also named as apostles" (Luke 6:13). He then spent approximately two years giving them close and concentrated instruction in anticipation of their work. The intimate time and attention given to these men who were to become the leaders of the Early Church can be understood as nothing less than an intense training effort, from which we can learn further principles of Jesus' method. Jesus invited his disciples to become students in training, when he said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19).

So the initial step was deciding on those who would be part of the target group. He looked for those with potential for the work they were to do. In the case of the disciples he looked for humble, teachable men!

For the carrying out of His work, Christ did not choose the learning and eloquence of the Jewish Sanhedrin or the power of Rome. . . . The Master chose humble, unlearned men. . . . These men He purposed to train and educate. . . . They in turn were to educate others. . . .

Jesus also later sent out seventy evangelists to do a work similar to that performed by the apostles (Luke 10:1). These were apparently chosen from among a group of followers who had been with him for some time, observing his ministry and preparing for outreach:

When the twelve were sent out on their first separate mission, other disciples accompanied Jesus in His journey through Galilee. Thus they had the privilege of intimate association with Him and direct personal instruction. Now this larger number also were to go forth on a separate mission.²

Enablers of the church today should give careful attention to the selection step as did Jesus. Robert Coleman seems to capture some of the central elements of Jesus' training method in The Master Plan of Evangelism, where he highlights them as chapter titles.³ Some of these labels are used here because they so aptly express principles included in Jesus' method. Coleman refers, for example, to association. This appropriately reflects the fact that Jesus

¹White, Acts of the Apostles, p. 17.

²White, Desire of Ages, p. 488.

³Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Westwood, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1963).

spent significant time with the disciples. He worked hard at building a relationship with them. Rather than being removed, He experienced everyday life with them, encountering the same things they encountered, and taught them through his responses and lifestyle. He had appointed the disciples "that they might be with Him" (Mark 3:14). Ellen White comments:

It was by personal contact and association that Jesus trained His disciples. Sometimes he taught them, sitting among them on the mountainside; sometimes beside the sea, or walking with them by the way. . . .

After the resurrection people saw the effect of this association on the disciples and "began to recognize them as having been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

Coleman also mentions impartation. This is the instructional phase of training where content is given. Jesus clearly communicated with His disciples the principles He wished them to be acquainted with. This was an on-going process, however; there are certain instances in Jesus' ministry which illustrate His use of this principle--(e.g.), the giving of the Beatitudes (Luke 6:20-23) and the instruction preceding the sending out of the twelve (Luke 9:1-6).

Christ's method also included demonstration. Jesus did not present cold theory! He shared the principles and then demonstrated them by His own example. In some cases He acted out a principle and then drew lessons from it, but always His trainees could see what He was trying to communicate. For example, when teaching the lesson

¹The Desire of Ages, p. 152.

of humility at the last supper, He washed the disciples feet as a servant and said:

Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. (John 13:12-15)

Jesus could just as easily have said, "I gave you a demonstration."

Jesus' ability to demonstrate or exemplify what He wished to share was vital to His success as an educator.

He did not sermonize as men do today. . . . On His journeys through country and cities, He took them with Him, that they might see how He taught the people.

In the training of the disciples the example of the Saviour's life was far more effective than mere doctrinal instruction. When they were separated from Him, every look, and tone and word came back to them. Often when in conflict with the enemies of the gospel, they repeated His words, and as² they saw their effect upon the people, they rejoiced greatly.

Jesus knew that this was a crucial part of training. Trainees must see their teachers in action before they can become capable of acting like them; "everyone after he has been fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). Training is incomplete without demonstration, because only demonstration leads to true reproduction!

Christ further believed in delegation. That is, he shared responsibilities with those who were being trained. He asked them to apply and to practice what he had been sharing with them in real life situations. They were given responsibility. Finally the time came when Christ "sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God, and to perform healing" (Luke 9:2).

¹Ibid., p. 152.

²Ibid., pp. 349, 350.

Coleman also refers to supervision, i.e., the on-going management of trainees. Christ saw the necessity of continuing guidance, organization, and leadership. So He continued to give overall direction to the work of His disciples. When the apostles returned from their first mission they came back and discussed their experiences with Jesus. They apparently shared their joys and frustrations, their successes and failures in a kind of post-practice review and evaluation session (Luke 9:10), and He gave them further instruction and encouragement:

They had committed errors in their first work as evangelists, and as they frankly told Christ of their experiences, He saw that they needed much instruction. He saw too, that they had become weary . . . and needed rest.¹

This work of supervision sustained the apostles until later when they themselves could take over the work and serve as supervisors and instructors for others (1 Pet 5:1-3; Acts 20:17-38).²

These six elements, then, seem to reflect the basic training strategy of Jesus. They are simple, but power-laden. Perhaps the fact that they are rather straight-forward and somewhat obvious explains why they are so seldom incorporated into current leadership models. It's easy to overlook the obvious in a fevered search for what is new. But it is my strong conviction that the church that duplicates this basic training model through its enabling leadership is the church that will see success. While new mediums and channels should be explored to allow the church to speak winsomely to the

¹Ibid., p. 359.

²White, Acts of the Apostles, p. 17.

times, failure will result if they lead to strategies and methods that overshadow the elemental principles of Jesus Christ. The Seventh-day Adventist Church stands before God with the divine invitation to become, in a fuller sense, God's true church, by urging its local congregations around the world to become vibrant enabling centers through the implementation of these principles.

CHAPTER V

CONTRACTING WITH THE CHURCHES

Negotiations with the Damascus/ Olney S.D.A. Churches

After moving to the Washington, D.C. area to assume teaching responsibilities in the summer of 1981, I began in earnest to develop three lay-training topics for use in area churches. I was guided by the Biblical model of lay pastoral ministry discovered in my earlier research and by insights gained from contemporary lay-training approaches. By the end of the summer I felt ready to look for a church in which I could conduct my first training seminar.

Elder Ron Wisbey, President of the Potomac Conference of S.D.A.s was contacted and asked to suggest a church which might benefit from an experimental training program. He suggested the churches of the Olney/Damascus district as potentially responsive. In late September Don Kellogg, the district pastor, was contacted by phone and asked if he would be interested in a seminar. He indicated a strong interest, so a visit to the Damascus church was arranged for the purpose of evaluating the district's suitability for a seminar.

Following this visit, a meeting was arranged at the home of the pastor to discuss the program in greater detail. At the end of the meeting the pastor indicated that this was a very timely program for both of his churches and that he would be eager to have the

program if his leaders would be receptive. After checking with his elders over the next several weeks, the pastor arranged for a meeting with the Olney elders on December 19, 1981, and with the Damascus elders on January 9, 1982.

Both groups were very receptive to the idea of having a training seminar. The pastor had done such a good job of selling the concept to his leaders that the only questions were about how the program would be scheduled, which of the three seminars would be offered, and which church would be the first to participate. In the end, scheduling problems dictated that the program begin in the Damascus church while another be planned in Olney for a future date.

Once it was determined that the first seminar would be held in Damascus, it was suggested that the first seminar could focus on one of three topics: (1) personal evangelism, (2) lay preaching, or (3) pastoral care and visitation. It was necessary to do some negotiating on the scheduling of the seminar sessions, but after looking at the options Saturday, January 30, at 3:00 p.m. was targeted as the beginning date and time of the first session. The meetings were planned for alternating weeks throughout the seminar, primarily using Saturday afternoons, with some Friday evening meetings during the early phase. The pastor requested that his deacons be able to participate in the program along with the elders, feeling that they also could profit from the experience. This was agreed to while making it clear that the primary thrust of the seminar would be directed at the elders as discussed previously. The meeting concluded with a spirit of eagerness and anticipation on the part of all.

The church board was asked to take a formal action authorizing the program so that all could proceed with the full support of the church's leadership. A contractual relationship between the pastor and myself was established in order to clearly define my relationship to him and the church. Thus, I committed myself to work in the church for a specified period of time and the pastor agreed to the use of his church as a training laboratory. This was meant to assure the continuity of the program, and to acknowledge a degree of accountability on the part of both the instructor and the pastor. Pastor Kellogg readily agreed that both actions would be healthy and desirable. Later board action was taken and a contract was drawn up and signed by the pastor and myself.

Profile of the Damascus S.D.A. Church

When organized, on November 21, 1942, the Damascus Adventist Church was an active congregation serving a small, rural, agriculturally-based community. This community profile held true from the 1940s through the 60s, but the 1980s finds the church serving an area being transformed into a significant residential area made up of many professional families working along the Interstate-70 highway corridor and in the Greater Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Damascus can well be described as a small town growing up. Unfortunately, the church has not, in recent years, kept up with the growing pace of the community. Over the past five years the church has grown by only 12 members, having a present membership of 150. It has a physical plant that is considered only marginally satisfactory for the needs of the congregation, in terms of adequacy, and

would probably be considered moderately attractive in appearance.

The membership is made up primarily of American whites (97%), with a small representation of Asians (3%). The church is well represented by various age groups. The youth group, aged ten to twenty years, make up about 15 percent of the membership; young adults, twenty-four to forty years, about 35 percent; middle-age adults, forty-one to sixty years, about 30 percent; and senior members, sixty-one years and older, about 20 percent.

From a pastoral perspective, the church does have some significant strengths. Its membership includes a large number of professional couples who have significant skills and abilities. There are some excellent leaders who are highly gifted and involved in the life of the church. There are many children in the congregation which indicates a strong potential for biological growth, and bright prospects of harnessing youthful energy and vitality for future church programming. This is accented by the existence of an active Pathfinder club, which provides regular youth activities, and the sponsorship of a thriving church school. The church most certainly has the ability to attract and hold young families because of this youth orientation. The congregation appears to be a warm, friendly church family that is open to change and new ideas.

According to the present pastor, there are some needs, however. Few members are willing to take leadership roles, resulting in a small core of committed and capable people being severely overworked and spread so thin that their effectiveness is diminished. Within the last year or two the church school has gone through a

crisis period, during which there has been a great deal of conflict between members over its management. It is hoped that progress is being made. However, this continues to be one of the greatest challenges faced by the church. While the church has had a good record of meeting its financial obligations in the past, it faces a very heavy financial responsibility in serving as the school's primary source of income in the future. Because of the large percentage of funds required to operate the school there is little left to support other programs and care for other needs.

At present it appears also that a significant number of members are facing financial, relational, and spiritual challenges, implying a strong need for pastoral care. Members seem to be caught up in their jobs, and sapped of time, money, and energy by their vigorous involvement in their work. For many members, commuting is a big problem, leaving them too exhausted to participate satisfactorily in church and family activities. Consequently, there is little missionary outreach and intra-church nurturing being carried out by members. There appears to be a genuine need for revival, recommitment and a new experience with the joys of being a Christian on the part of many.

Negotiations with the Wheaton S.D.A. Church

Pastor John McGraw of the Wheaton S.D.A. Church was approached in May, 1982, about the possibility of holding a second seminar in his church. This man's strong, positive pastoral leadership is well known. In addition, the Wheaton Adventist Church is a

vibrant, friendly, growing church with good potential for innovation. It also offered a contrast to the Damascus church by being a significantly larger church and located in a more densely populated area.

Upon contacting the pastor the Damascus' church program was explained, and my interest in another church for a similar lay-training program was expressed. The pastor said that the program sounded very interesting, and that he had been wanting to get his laymen involved in visitation for some time and that this might be a helpful way of getting them started. He expressed how busy he was in his pastoral program, and that the many demands of the pastorate made it difficult to find some time for this type of training. He further indicated that having someone come in from the college would be well received and might even be an asset in creating an additional degree of interest and participation. To my surprise, he went on to say that he had heard about the program at Damascus, and that he had talked with the pastor who had expressed appreciation for what was happening there.

It was necessary to begin the seminar in the near future in order to meet certain deadlines within my personal time schedule. The pastor felt his church could be ready for such a program as soon as it could be arranged. We decided to meet personally to go over the proposed program in greater detail.

When pastor McGraw visited my office, he expressed interest in pastoral care and visitation as a topic for the seminar. Consequently, we looked over materials to be covered under this topic and the teaching methods to be used. July 10 was chosen as the starting

date, and Sabbath afternoons as the most suitable meeting times. It was decided that should participants miss a session, a tape of the presentation would be provided.

McGraw said that he had already discussed the possibility of having the seminar with his head elder who had responded favorably. He planned to contact the other elders individually and as a group during the next couple of weeks, and then take the plan to the board. He would be back in touch with me to confirm the plan and sign a contract (see appendix, p. 167) outlining our mutual participation in the seminar.

When the pastor had confirmed the program with the board, I agreed to send a personal letter to each of the elders giving them an additional invitation to the training seminar. We also discussed the plan to send a bi-weekly letter to the participants reporting on the progress of the program, and highlighting each coming topic.

Profile of the Wheaton S.D.A. Church

The Wheaton Adventist Church was organized in 1966 by fifty-five members who were, largely, employees of the Review and Herald Publishing Association. Initially, it rented worship facilities until a new facility was built consisting of an auditorium and classrooms on a desirable, twelve-acre tract of land in 1967. The church has been expanding since its organization, growing to a current membership of 315, an average of over sixteen new members per year. The Wheaton Adventist Church has been active in the community through the years, offering a number of evangelistic and humanitarian services for the enrichment of the community. It has also been a strong

supporter of the John Nevins Andrews Elementary School in Takoma Park, Maryland.

The membership consists, primarily, of white Americans (80%), but is also represented by a number of West Indians (12%), Black Americans (4%), and other groups (4%). In terms of age, approximately 20 percent are youth, aged ten to twenty; 47 percent are young adults, aged twenty-one to forty; 24 percent are middle aged, forty-one to sixty years; and 9 percent are seniors, aged sixty-one and above. These are remarkable percentages, highlighting that 67 percent of the membership is forty years old or below.

The church has an attractive facility that is adequate for the programs of the church, though long-range plans call for the building of a new sanctuary so that the present auditorium can be used primarily for non-worship functions. The church has historically been strong in financially supporting both local and world-wide programs of the denomination. The church has been seen by most as a very friendly, caring church with an outstanding core of capable leaders. Further, the church seems to be well-organized with a clear plan of community outreach through various seminars and health-education programs. A special strength of the church, as perceived by the pastor and membership, is a very well-staffed and managed program of instruction for its young people in its Sabbath School. Some have ranked it as one of the finest among area Adventist churches. The greatest needs of the church, from a pastoral perspective, are the broadening of the base of lay participation in all phases of church activity and the eventual construction of the new church.

CHAPTER VI

THE TRAINING SEMINARS

Description of the Damascus Seminar

The Seminar on Pastoral Care and Visitation was intended to help prepare elders to serve as effective lay pastors by (1) helping them understand the broad leadership role they are to play in the church, and (2) by giving them specific, supervised instruction and practical experience in certain key aspects of pastoral care. Special attention was given to the function of pastoral visitation. The initial sessions led participants through a study of basic Biblical concepts regarding ministry, proceeded to examine the Bible's teachings about special leadership roles, and finally aimed at the role and work of the pastor-teacher. This pastor-teacher role was first examined in the context of the Early Church and then in the contemporary context--especially as carried out by laymen. The remaining portion of the seminar focused on specific activities of lay pastoral ministry--blending classroom instruction with actual field experience.

The ten-part seminar was held in the Damascus church January 30, 1982, to June 12, 1982, with eight lay participants. Sessions were held on an alternating basis on Friday evenings and Saturday afternoons every two weeks. Sessions covered an approximately two

and a half hour period. The first four sessions were primarily theoretical in nature, whereas the last six sessions were planned to divide time between classroom presentations and visitation exercises.

The classroom phase of the program was conducted on a lecture/discussion basis within a small-group setting. Notebooks with printed topic outlines (see appendix, pp. 169, 170) were provided for each session so that participants were encouraged to take notes and fill in blanks as each session progressed. An overhead projector was used extensively in the first several sessions as a means of providing fill-in information and illustrating primary points. Opportunity was provided for feedback and discussion through each session. Participants also took turns reading texts. Lab exercises were provided primarily by means of actual membership visitation during the last half of the seminar. The pastor and I shared the responsibility for providing field instruction and modelling during the visitation.

Supervision was carried out by means of post-visitation review and discussion with participants. There was also a degree of peer supervision in that participants reflected on and discussed their visits with partners following each visit, and gave oral reports of their experiences to the group as a whole. Written reports of each visit were also requested of visitation teams. These reports were given to the pastor.

The selection process was specifically the responsibility of the pastor. It was felt that he would know best how to work with his individual church and its leaders. In this case, the pastor

opened the seminar to both church elders and deacons. It had been made clear at the beginning that the focus of the seminar would be on the work of the church elder and that elders and potential elders would be given primary encouragement. The pastor felt that the seminar, while aimed primarily at the elders, could be helpful to selected deacons as well.

The cost of the seminar was minimal. The notebooks and printed materials provided for the participants cost approximately \$85. The only other cost was for overhead transparencies which amounted to approximately \$15. The entire seminar was conducted for an approximate total of \$100. Travel costs for the visitation were borne by the participants as they shared the use of their cars.

The content of the seminar is outlined topically below with a brief explanation of the direction of each topic. One or more topics were covered at each of the ten sessions.

1. The nature of ministry. This section explored the basic meaning and essence of ministry from the perspective of the Bible and the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. It included a word study of the terms "minister" and "ministry." Its purpose was to assist participants in getting a clear concept of what ministry involves and to see how broadly it applies to various kinds of Christian service.

2. The identity of the ministry. This section directed the attention of participants to the fact that every disciple of Jesus is a minister in a general sense. All are responsible to reproduce the ministry of Jesus to the extent that they are enabled by the Holy

Spirit. Every Christian is prepared for ministry by God in four specific ways: (1) by being anointed by the water and Spirit at baptism, (2) by being called into the fellowship of the church, (3) by being given specific gift(s), and (4) by being equipped for service through the agency of the church.

3. Special ministries. This presentation highlighted the idea that while all believers are ministers in a broad sense, God recognizes certain individuals as having a special leadership and training function within the church. It examined this pattern in both the Old and New Testaments and pointed out how key leaders were generally recognized by a special call and a special commissioning. The role of elder was highlighted as a special ministry.

4. Lay pastoral ministry in the New Testament. This topic pointed out that the elders mentioned in the NT were likely laymen, for the most part, and that they provided much of the pastoral leadership for the church during its formative period. This led to an appeal for elders to recognize themselves as legitimate lay pastors in the church today and to make a firm commitment to fulfill the duties of a lay pastor as suggested by the NT model.

5. The essence of lay pastoral care. This study helped participants to discover the several elemental functions that constitute pastoral work. The various functions can be classified by three broad categories--administration, nurture, and evangelism. The work of the supervising pastor was compared and contrasted with that of the lay pastor, and suggestions as to how one interfaces with the other were made.

6. The need for pastoral care. The importance of pastoral work in each of its phases was stressed, together with emphasis on the nurturing phase as foundational in preserving church members who are healthy, happy, and growing in Christ. Special attention was drawn to the opportunities and challenges of carrying out pastoral nurture within the Adventist Church.

7. Organizing for membership nurture. This study suggested that there were four sides to the work of nurture. Nurture implies (1) feeding the flock or "members" spiritually, (2) training the flock, (3) comforting those who are in need, and (4) guarding the flock. It was made clear that the focus of the rest of the seminar would be on the aspects of nurture having to do with guardianship and comforting. Further, some concrete suggestions were made about how to initiate a nurturing program by means of systematic visitation of church members. Participants were challenged to discuss how they should organize a visitation program for their church and to "brainstorm" with the pastor about how and when it could begin.

8. Nurture through visitation. The purpose of this presentation was to prepare participants for their first visits in the homes of church families. Some important objectives in making home visits were reviewed together with some guidelines for successful home visitation. Emphasis was placed on sharing tips that were practical. Participants were instructed how to arrange for the visit, how to carry the conversation, how to make it spiritual, how to close the visit, and how to adapt the visit to active or inactive members. They were challenged to review these carefully in preparation for their first visits.

9. Developing listening skills. This topic was introduced by the film, "Listening Beyond Words." This emphasized how important listening is in fostering strong human relationships and made some suggestions about how all can develop listening abilities. The film was followed by a discussion on the implications of good listening skills for visitation.

10. Hospital visitation. Participants were introduced to bedside ministry with a list of "dos" and "dont's" and given a conversation strategy.

11. Anointing the sick. Under this topic participants were led to explore the nature of and basis for anointing the sick from the standpoint of the Bible. Questions as Who participates in an anointing service? What kind of preparation is necessary? and How are arrangements made? were discussed. A step-by-step procedure was also outlined for successfully conducting an anointing.

12. Scriptural counseling. If the participants faithfully sustain a visitation program over a period of time, they will gain the confidence of their fellow members and, in time, will be asked to give wise scriptural advice on various issues pertaining to living a successful Christian life. Scriptural teaching and counseling is a natural part of the work of a shepherd as he cares for the church. The participants were encouraged to develop skill in the use of the Scriptures for practical Christian counseling. A distinction was made between this type of Scriptural counseling and the counseling that a modern secular psychologist might perform. Participants were cautioned not to try to be mini-psychologists, but to share the basic

principles of victorious living as emphasized in the life of Jesus and the Bible as a whole. Two examples of this type of counseling were provided so that participants could see how this might be implemented.

13. Communion in the home. This final topic presented the significance of the communion services for individual church members. It was highlighted as being an important way of expressing one's relationship with the Lord as is evident from the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White. It was pointed out that while most members have the opportunity to celebrate the Lord's supper on a systematic basis at church, some members are unable to do so. Some are shut-in and only rarely or never get to attend church services, and others miss the appointed opportunities for communion because of illness. Those who are unable to attend regular communion services should be provided with the opportunity to have communion served to them in their homes. This is part of the nurturing work for which lay pastors are responsible. The program was concluded by sharing some in-home models for celebrating communion as well as the use of the portable communion kit. These were geared to stimulate some creative approaches in the minds of the participants.

Evaluation/Reflection

The results of the Damascus seminar are encouraging. Certainly there are areas where adjustments are needed, and aspects which need to be strengthened, but overall the seminar met or exceeded expectations.

The group seemed to be sincere, spiritual, eager to learn and work, and was supportive in every phase of the program. This congenial spirit, however, may not be typical of all church groups.

Strengths/Successes

1. The small-group setting. The group was able to function well on the small-group basis because the communication dynamics that resulted were very positive for the learning experience. A sense of informality, fellowship, and warmth was very evident. There were eight in the group, with seven participating to the end. The average attendance was six. Members seemed to feel free to speak out, make comments, and ask questions at will. In the visitation phase of the program there was ample opportunity for the men to visit with one another on a rotating basis, and therefore to further strengthen relationships within the group.

2. The size of the church. The size of the church was also a positive aspect of the program since it gave me insights into training laymen in a smaller church. For a first-time experience this was probably a good setting in which to work. Many Adventist churches fall into this size category and therefore the lessons learned should be applicable in other churches. The size was significant also in terms of the impact of the program on the membership. The participants were able to visit between 17 and 20 percent of the entire membership in the two months of actual home visitation. This was a significant impact in a relatively short period of time. Members quickly became aware that something was happening within the

church. The momentum for such a program can be built, and the system of the church positively altered much more quickly in a small church such as this.

3. The support of the pastor. A very important factor contributing to the success of the seminar was the supportive stance of the pastor. Though he was not able to participate beyond the first several sessions, due to evangelistic meetings in Olney, he was solidly behind the program and strongly encouraged participants to stay with it. It seemed that this was absolutely crucial, both in starting and sustaining the program. In this case, the pastor was not only supportive but extremely open and willing to encourage honest and constructive feedback. Some pastors might be fearful of the possibility that an outside minister, working with his people, might pick up some negative feedback regarding his performance as a leader. This was not evident at all in the case of the Damascus pastor. He made me feel very comfortable. While this could be an area of sensitivity in some situations, there was a good rapport and spirit of teamwork.

4. Organization. The program was generally well put together and handled in an orderly, well-planned manner. Topics were logically integrated. A definite goal was maintained for each session, and a clear sense of progression was made toward specific objectives. A time schedule was established early in the program and was followed as closely as circumstances permitted. While there were some organizational problems that developed from the standpoint of the group's own planning of a visitation strategy, the program

itself was quite solid in this respect.

5. The scriptural base. Every effort was made to make the seminar a spiritual experience by linking every phase to scriptural principles. There was a liberal usage of the Bible in the objective instruction and in sharing practical methods. The motivating power of scripture was well received by the participants. The evaluative comments made by some substantiate this.

6. Materials. Materials seemed pertinent for both the phase and level of lay ministry that was being dealt with. The material touched on areas where most participants had had little or no past exposure as church leaders. Suggestions that were made, and examples given, were all specific enough that participants could see how principles could be implemented. While I will continue to look for ways of improving the seminar's content, I believe that the body of material used was helpful in addressing the issue of pastoral care through visitation.

7. Instructional methods. First, it appears that the lecture/discussion/practice method of conducting the seminar was very useful in helping participants learn both skills and principles. While even more concentration could have been given to the discussion aspect, as indicated later, the combination of these three elements has proven to be very workable for this type of lay training. The lectures were supported with written materials that helped participants grasp and retain concepts for future use. Note-taking was encouraged by asking the participants to fill in blanks in conjunction with what was being shared by the instructor. This kept them

involved and their minds keenly focused on what was presented. Visual aids were used to strengthen the impact of material. While some materials may yet be improved upon, they were effective in reaching the goals of the seminar.

The written materials were also helpful in providing a sense of orderliness, direction, and "professionalism" to the program. Materials were contained in a notebook under topic headings. Also tapes were provided for those who missed sessions so that they could be brought up to date on what the group had covered. There were occasions where this proved helpful.

Secondly, the program included the concept of learning by practicing skills. Opportunity was given for participants to both observe experienced individuals in the practice of visitation ministry and to personally apply theoretical experiences learned in class to field situations. While lecture and discussion received a greater emphasis in terms of time, fully one-third to nearly one-half of the last six sessions of the program was spent in applying principles. In other words, theory and practice were blended in a substantial way. The program helped participants assume their responsibilities. Practice sessions were followed by team discussions of their experiences, allowing time for reflective and evaluative thinking about the outcomes of those experiences. This seems to be the seminar's greatest strength--it led people to get involved and to develop a level of confidence and competence. Lab experiences could have been better coordinated with the lecture topics in some cases, but there was a clear degree of success. In fact, it is probably impossible

to integrate the lectures and labs in any ideal way. For example, it would be impossible to link a lecture on anointing with an actual anointing service in every case, as there may be no member needing such a service at that particular time.

8. Communication. Another strength of the program was keeping participants informed. Each week a letter was sent and/or a secretary phoned them to remind them of the seminar and to highlight the topic to be discussed. This was in addition to announcements made in church via the bulletin and orally. At every stage of the program participants knew what was happening, keeping the impetus high in support of attendance.

9. Time period. The time frame for the last several classes was extended beyond that originally planned due to necessary schedule adjustments. In total, the seminar covered approximately four and a half months. In re-evaluating the program it seems evident that all classwork could have been completed in three and a half to four months. However, a shorter period than three to four months would have been inadequate in providing time for both lab and classwork. The fact that the program continued beyond three months appeared to be a definite strength. For maximum benefit, it is recommended that future seminars cover a minimum of three months. The idea of meeting on alternate weeks received a good response. It meant that other church programs could continue during this training period. The participants did not feel it was disruptive and all-consuming. If the program had been compacted into a ten-consecutive-week period it would have overridden everything else and probably left participants

with a feeling of "relief" when it was over. The alternate week idea seemed to fit better into the context of a busy lay leader's life. Other ways of arranging the seminars may be tried, but in no case should the program involve less than one quarter's time. The program could be strengthened if the instructor could stay and work with the participants as field supervisor for an additional three- to six-month period on a once-a-month basis. This added time could help solidify the visitation in its long-term aspect.

10. Meeting "felt needs." The participants acknowledged that there is a real need for this type of training in the church. Most indicated that they had never been trained in a systematic fashion. They appeared to gain a sense of satisfaction from the personal attention and instruction given to them. The pastor expressed his conviction that this is where we ought to be placing greater emphasis in the church and was encouraging about the value he saw in the program. Pastors, generally, are strongly supportive of lay training. In this case the pastor said the church needed this kind of training at this time because of its young team of leaders who needed the instruction. In this specific case, then, the training program was timely and clearly met "felt needs."

11. Adaptability. This program is simple and flexible enough to be used by others, including local pastors, in the training of other groups of laymen. The materials used and methods applied are adaptable to any size church. Principles are also adaptable to training classes in other areas of lay ministry such as witnessing. At the very least, it is hoped that the project would make a

contribution to other pastors by motivating those who have been hesitant to experiment with their own abilities in the area of lay training.

12. Low cost. The program was inexpensive. Materials were covered by a budget of \$100. Most churches could afford to sponsor such a program for this amount. The only additional cost would be the travel expense incurred by the instructor.

13. Attractive meeting place. The seminar was held in a very pleasant classroom at the church. The room was carpeted, well lighted, and furnished with an adequate number of tables and chairs. While atmosphere can negatively affect the success of a program, in this case it was an asset.

14. Instruction by someone outside the local congregation. This can be a plus in some respects. For one thing, a pastor is extremely busy. It is difficult for him to take the time necessary to both develop and conduct a lay-training program. Most ministers should be putting more of their time into this area, but are not. Many ministers would find it attractive and helpful to have an outside trainer come in--both because it gives them some relief and because they receive some instruction themselves in lay-training dynamics. I suggest that most ministers do not feel prepared to conduct lay training programs and would covet an opportunity to see how such training is accomplished. It is also true that an outside instructor is sometimes in a better position to say certain things and challenge lay leaders toward getting involved than is the pastor. He can talk a little "straighter" and more frankly than pastors

because they have a different relationship with lay leaders.

An outside instructor can also devote full attention and concentrate effort on the program, whereas the pastor is responsible for many other activities in the church through the duration of the training period. It is also a fact that someone coming into the church from outside the normal program may bring a fresh perspective and new approach that elicits a better response. Sometimes, simply having a new face, a new voice presenting a program can boost participation. It has already been suggested that having an outside person come into the church with a program could create some tensions between the pastor and the instructor; however, such problems did not develop in this case, and need not develop in any case if communication is clear. The instructor must take the position that the pastor is in charge--that he is the pastor's assistant and resource person.

15. Attendance. Attendance was a very positive influence in the success of this seminar. For the nine regular sessions, the eight individual participants attended an average of 74 percent of the time. Only one attended less than 67 percent of the sessions. Without this individual's poor attendance during the last segment of the program, the average attendance ranges around 80 percent. This is a very fine level of participation for a program which extended over a four-month period.

Weaknesses/Problems

1. Pastoral participation. While the pastor remained supportive throughout the program, he could not attend the meetings in

the latter half and was unable to provide the training during the visitation phase as originally planned. Again, this was due to his involvement in the evangelistic meetings. The field-training dimension of the program could have been enhanced had he been able to continue, and the pastor could have become even closer to his lay leaders. His lack of involvement severely hindered the organization of membership districts and the development of a master membership file. Clearly there were times when implementation would have been much stronger if he had been present at meetings and been able to more effectively hold his lay leaders accountable.

2. Timing of the visitation phase. The first four sessions were without visiting. The materials should have been condensed and the initial phase of the seminar restructured in order to begin visitation sooner. The men were eager to begin the visitation, as was the pastor.

3. Organizing membership districts. The group was never able to formally establish the church visitation districts as agreed upon early in the seminar. It might have been accomplished if I had taken it in my own hands, but I felt it best to work with the pastor and his appointed lay leader in seeing this through. This was, perhaps, the single greatest source of frustration during the seminar. I tactfully tried time and again to nudge the pastor to follow through on this, and each time the assurance was given that it would be taken care of, but it never was. I expressed quite openly my fear that the long-range consequences of not accomplishing this degree of organization could be significant. There was also a problem

determining which lay leader was to be the coordinator of this visitation plan. At first the pastor tried to work with his original head elder, but at the end began to look to the head elder-elect who was finally recognized as the coordinator. By the final meeting, the elders did agree on a specific date to discuss the issue of visitation districts, but it took place after the conclusion of the seminar.

Another organizational problem was holding people accountable for presenting written reports of their visits. Report forms were provided that were to be turned into the pastor. However, the pastor was not able to give the attention to this that was needed. Reporting did take place, but it was at times irregular, and the fact that the pastor did not follow through on establishing a master membership visitation file was a detriment. I kept my own record of the visitation which was provided in typed form to the pastor at the conclusion of the program.

4. Cancellations. Two instructional sessions had to be cancelled at the end of the schedule due to the illness and death of my father. While this was obviously unavoidable, it did affect the flow of the series in the final phase and forced the doubling up of class presentations. It could have been tied off more cleanly had this not been necessary. The emotional and physical stress created by this situation no doubt affected other aspects of the program during the final stage.

5. Relationship between lecture and lab work--sometimes this could have been better arranged. It would have been helpful to have

arranged the lecture on "Communion in the Home" so that it coincided with communion at the church. Some role-playing exercises might be included in the future to help connect the lectures with the lab work.

6. Topic deletions. Certain sections that were originally listed in the participant notebooks were not covered due to a lack of time. The cancellations mentioned above were a factor, but there were also too many topics for the allotted time. Adjustments and deletions were made as the seminar progressed in order to present the most timely and helpful issues. Some sections such as "Comforting in Crisis" and "Personal Skills" were covered briefly under other headings. In order to cover some of the deleted topics and to present new topics that pertain to this area of ministry, I could in the future present them on a once-a-quarter basis beyond the regular seminar.

7. Lengthy classes. There was a tendency for the sessions to run overtime, thus causing participants to be pressed in meeting visitation appointments. There were occasions where those being visited had to be phoned to let them know that their visiting team would be a few minutes late. Usually the sessions became lengthy due to the discussion that was taking place within the group. The schedule of topics should be rearranged to allow for this discussion without interfering with the visitation. One approach would be to hold the discussion until after the lecture material had been covered, thus placing a natural "cap" on it. However, I tend to feel

that the lecture material should be shortened in order to provide more discussion time.

8. Notebooks. The idea of providing notebooks was a good one; however, those used were not sturdy nor large enough for the amount of material provided. Sturdier notebooks will be used in the future.

9. Development of the materials. Some of the materials were developed as the seminar progressed from month to month. It would have been better if the material had been put together before the seminar began. I would have felt less pressure, and been more familiar with certain topics. There were a couple of sessions where preparation was not up to expectations, simply because more time was needed for refinement.

10. Insufficient time for feedback and reflection. The group really needed more time for discussing and sharing their visiting experiences. Many important insights can be gained from this kind of sharing, and morale and comradery increased. Substantial opportunity was provided for individual visiting teams to share, but more time was needed for this to take place in the larger group.

11. Need to clarify visitation procedures. Before the first visits were made in the homes of members, details of the visitation were discussed with the pastor. The basic approach, philosophy, and the mechanics of the visitation were shared. I also expressed a willingness to work within a framework that the pastor was comfortable with. We worked out a mutually agreeable strategy without problems. It became clear, however, that it would have been advantageous

to have discussed the visitation in greater detail at the beginning of the program. In future seminars all details should be reviewed with the pastor in the early planning stages.

Participant Evaluation

Each participant was asked to fill out an evaluation form expressing his personal response to the seminar in its various phases. Participants were instructed not to sign their name so they would feel free to share their feelings without reservation. Six evaluation forms were returned. The responses seemed to indicate a rather positive feeling toward the seminar experience. In response to the question, "How would you rate the value of the seminar for you personally?" four participants circled "very good" and two circled "excellent." In response to the question, "How would you rate the value of the seminar for the church?" one participant circled "good," one responded "very good," and four responded "excellent." The participants were asked a number of other key questions, such as "What was most helpful? What was least helpful? Would you recommend this seminar for lay leaders of other churches?" and "What were the strengths and weaknesses of the seminar?" In addition, participants were asked to make comments about specific phases of the program which would be helpful in refining the seminar for future presentations.

In answer to the question, "What did you feel were the strengths of the seminar?" responses included:

Topics were well organized, promoted confidence in people by getting them involved, format varied and interesting, good

balance between class and field experience, strong Biblical foundation, showed elders and deacons they have a big and important job, hands-on practice, visiting . . . information . . . encouragement, all was good.

While some did not answer the question, "What did you feel were the areas which could be strengthened?" others mentioned:

Not sure, organization of visits, discussing mistakes in visitation, some workshops were much too long . . . allow more time for actual practical visitation experience, nothing glaring . . . perhaps more involvement with the pastor, there should be practice sessions on anointing the sick.

At the end of the evaluation form, participants were asked to straightforwardly indicate whether or not they would recommend the seminar for laymen of other churches. The group unanimously stated their positive recommendation.

Description of the Wheaton Seminar

The elders of the Wheaton Adventist Church elected to have the same seminar as had been presented to the lay leaders of the Damascus Adventist Church. Because of this, the description of the present seminar is the same as outlined above. The methods used and topics covered were identical, except that some of the individual lectures were shortened and emphasis was placed differently, within topics, in order to better suit the needs of this church group.

The most significant difference related to the timing of the seminar sessions. In the Wheaton seminar the initial three sessions were conducted on two back to back weekends on a Saturday afternoon, Friday evening, Saturday afternoon sequence. The remaining sessions of the seminar were held every other Saturday and were divided into two parts--the class lecture period, which was held for one hour

immediately following the worship service, and the visitation period, usually held from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. (see appendix, p. 171). In all, there were nine regular participants who attended the seminar.

Evaluation/Reflection

This section will reflect on and evaluate the Wheaton seminar in the light of the previous seminar. Areas of improvement, areas which continue to be challenging, and reference to any new insights gained will be identified. A report on participation response will also be given.

Strengths/Improvements

1. Makeup of the group. The participants represented a wide spectrum of age and occupational groups and appeared to be exceptionally sharp mentally and spiritually. It was clear that a pre-existing bond of fellowship and mutuality existed among members of the group, and that the seminar had a good relational foundation on which to build. This was a very vital element in the success of the seminar.

2. Pastoral support and participation. It became evident early that this seminar was going to be strengthened over the Damascus seminar because of the positive and active role the pastor was able to take throughout. The fact that the pastor was unusually capable in relating to his congregation and his lay leadership was a further asset in this respect. He was able to take much of the burden off of me by setting up each session, arranging the visits, keeping records, promoting various aspects of the program, and

working closely with me in actual visitation. The pastor attended every meeting but one and did everything possible to provide for the program's needs. No transition was needed from my leadership to that of the pastor, because the pastor had been participating in the seminar all along and was seen as a co-instructor. The follow-up program will be much stronger because the pastor has participated in the program from the ground up and will be able to supervise participants and hold them accountable for their commitments and program objectives. Having seen the contrast between a program where the pastor has been involved in a limited sense, and a program where the pastor has been actively involved from beginning to end, it becomes obvious that the participation of the pastor can largely determine the enduring quality of the seminar.

3. Organization of visitation. The week by week organization of the visitation during this seminar was much better. The head elder was asked by the pastor to take the lead in organizing the church membership into visitation districts with an elder in charge of each. The head elder developed a map in which members were identified geographically and then negotiated with the other elders to determine who would be responsible for each church family. One of the sessions was dedicated to this organizational step, with the head elder leading out. A color-code system was used to link members and elders for visitation purposes.

This had been a weak element in the previous seminar, and it was good to see this aspect taken care of during this seminar.

4. Adjustment of material. Some adjustments were made in

the way topics were presented during the seminar. In several cases the material was streamlined so the most important points could be covered more quickly and more time be allowed for discussion. Earlier there had been a tendency to have an imbalance between lecture and discussion. Progress was made in this area, though I feel additional material should be deleted in order to provide even more time for discussion. While the content has been good, I feel it has been too concentrated at points. More time needs to be allowed for participants to digest the material as they go through the seminar.

5. Reporting on visitation. This was one area that needed attention in the last seminar. More time was provided at the beginning of the sessions for the visiting teams to report on the experiences they had had. This proved to be a very inspirational period as participants discussed their experiences.. They were both motivated and instructed by the visitation experiences of other participants. Still more can be done in maximizing the effectiveness of this reporting. There were times when reports were very weak or superficial, partly because of the two-week time lapse between sessions. It would be good if the reports were delivered on the following Sabbath, perhaps by having the group meet exclusively for that purpose for a few minutes after the worship service. The written reports were again called for; however, they were not turned in to the pastor on a systematic basis. The instructor or pastor will need to take a more active role in the future, holding participants accountable for those written reports. Fortunately, the oral reports often provided the information lacking in the written reports.

6. Group dynamics. I am absolutely convinced that training in a small-group context contributes greatly to the motivational level of the participants and builds a sense of comradeship and fellowship. This group had already developed a good degree of harmony; however, it was clear that this was enhanced during the seminar. There was an even greater openness among participants than at the earlier seminar. They were more willing to discuss personal needs, problems, and challenges and to become vulnerable in a healthy fellowship sense. The group developed pastoral skills through their own interpersonal relationships as well as in dealing with members outside the group. The greater amount of time allowed for discussion during this seminar contributed to this stronger group dynamic as did the personality make-up of the group. At the end of the seminar certain individuals were stressing how meaningful this group interaction had become to them personally and that it should continue despite the formal ending of the seminar. It was agreed that they would meet in the homes of participants on a rotating basis once a month in order to sustain this small-group rapport.

7. Increased communication with the general membership. Another factor which was positive about this particular program was the good level of communication maintained between the pastor and elders and the larger membership. A greater effort was made to keep members abreast of the fact that the elders were involved in a training program geared for visitation. This tended to unify the membership in being supportive of the effort and paved the way for the home

visitation. The pastor was largely responsible for this increased communication.

8. Earlier visitation. The Damascus seminar taught me that it would be better to get into the visitation phase of the program more quickly in order to keep motivational levels high. At Wheaton, the program was adjusted to do this and we started with the fourth session. The three earlier sessions were geared toward covering the introductory principles in just two weekends. This kept participants from feeling that the program was being drawn out too long before the visitation began and got them into the action phase earlier. The home visitation tends to highly motivate the participants to learn all that they can from the class presentations so that they can be adequately equipped to face the various pastoral situations. It would be possible, but difficult, to begin the visitation even sooner. To me, however, it seemed important to lay a strong scriptural base for the work of lay pastoring at the early stage of the seminar, and risky to rush into the visitation without strong undergirding.

9. Notebooks. The notebooks for this seminar were sturdier and capable of holding much more material. They added a degree of quality to the program. The church paid for the notebooks and dividers.

10. Anointing service. This seminar was also strengthened in that the group was able to participate in an anointing service. The pastor had a request for an anointing that came near the end of the seminar. Arrangements were made to have the pastor, elders, and

myself participate, at which time the principles discussed earlier, regarding this special service, could be demonstrated.

Needs/Problems

There were several problems that either were perpetuated in the Wheaton seminar or occurred fresh within this new context.

1. First, and most importantly, was the scheduling problem. Scheduling had been a minor problem during the Damascus program but grew into a much larger one in Wheaton. It developed because one of the participants felt that Sabbath afternoon sessions were a hardship for his family. The individual had dedicated the Sabbath as a time to spend with his wife and children. In Damascus the problem was handled by alternating meetings between Friday evenings and Sabbath afternoons, but the Wheaton group decided that the problem could be solved by having the class sessions for one hour immediately after the worship service on Sabbath and the visitation sessions later in the afternoon. With this plan, the individual wishing to spend the afternoon with his family could attend the class while already at the church for worship and then do his visitation during the week according to his own schedule. The rest of the group went home for lunch and returned at 4 p.m. on Sabbath for an hour and a half of visitation. From the beginning, I was not comfortable with this suggestion, but since the group supported it so unitedly, I agreed to work on this basis. It turned out to be a very unfortunate arrangement, and the most serious problem of the seminar. It placed the participants in the awkward position of having to ask their wives

to serve Sabbath lunch at a later hour and made car pooling necessary to get families home after the service. Participants also had to return at a separate time for the visitation. In addition, there were conflicts with the fellowship meal schedule. While the idea of altering this schedule was expressed several times, the group as a whole seemed unwilling to make a change. Perhaps, because they did not want to offend the person for whom the adjustment had originally been made. In the future, groups will be urged to avoid the arrangement followed by the Wheaton church. As evidenced by the evaluation forms filled out by participants, this timing element was the most unsatisfactory part of the seminar. It might have been better to have gone with a Friday evening class, having only visitation on Sabbath afternoon.

2. Another problem (which did not appear to damage the seminar), was starting and closing on schedule. The first three sessions were each ten to fifteen minutes late in getting started. Often those responsible for setting up the equipment and the tables arrived just a short time before the announced starting time. By the time everything was set up, we were behind schedule. Once we started to meet after the worship service, the problem was to get all of the men together as quickly as possible. It was usually 12:30 or 12:40 p.m. before the session could start.

There were times when the class period ran overtime by ten to fifteen minutes. It was difficult getting through all of the lecture material that had been planned. Sometimes this was because the material was simply too lengthy, and sometimes it was because the

discussion was not held within reasonable boundaries. I plan to delete unnecessary materials in the future and to develop skill at holding the line on discussion. There is the need for flexibility in adapting to the needs of individual groups in balancing the mix of lecture and discussion.

3. A third need was a better arrangement in visiting with individual teams. It would have been helpful had a schedule been set up early in the visitation program whereby I would have planned well in advance to visit with specific teams. As it turned out this was a rather random process. In fact, I never did get to visit with one team, despite several attempts. The amount of time that the pastor and I spent with each team could also be strengthened. However, this would probably necessitate a more lengthy training period. In this case, the plan was that the pastor would do on-going visitation with each of the teams, making the training process a perpetual part of his supervision.

Coming back to some of the positive aspects of the program, I was pleased with the attendance during the seminar. The average participant attended 77 percent of the sessions. This was up slightly from the Damascus seminar and, in my mind, an excellent figure for such a lengthy program.

The number of members contacted during the visitation is also very encouraging. According to the report given by the pastor, approximately forty families were contacted, suggesting that a significant percentage of the 315 members were visited within the three-month time span actually devoted to home visitation.

Participant Evaluation

As in the earlier seminar, the participants in the Wheaton seminar were asked to fill out a written evaluation form in which they expressed their reflective thinking on the seminar. Seven participants turned in an evaluation form. A sampling of their responses is as follows. In answer to the question, "How would you rate the value of the seminar for you personally?" six participants marked "excellent" and one marked "very good." In answer to the question, "How would you rate the value of the seminar for the church?" four participants marked "excellent" and three marked "very good." In answering the question, "What did you feel were the strengths of the seminar?" responses included:

. . . visitation, organization, enthusiasm, materials/presentations/discussions, better understanding of the role of an elder, leadership drawn together, personal dynamics of presentation, emphasis on scripture, personal touch of give and take discussion, establishing personal relationships.

In answering the question, "What did you feel were the areas which could be strengthened?" responses included:

. . . too much material/too short a time, timing conflicts, not enough time for discussion/many weeks involved, tied up Sabbaths, allow for more dialogue, have participants read Church Manual in advance, emphasize need for elders to have the Holy Spirit, more on-the-job training.

All participants indicated that they would recommend the seminar for lay leaders of other churches.

I was pleased with the outcome of the Wheaton seminar, and felt that while certain areas still need to be refined for future use, the seminar has proven helpful to the church and participants. Progress has been made when compared to the previous seminar, and

new lessons have been learned that have sharpened insights into lay training.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY/FUTURE PLANS

In reviewing my experiences during this project, I am gratified by what has taken place. Primary objectives seem to have been met and expectations have been realized to a remarkable degree. For example, laymen trained during the seminars will be able to better meet the needs of their respective church families by more effectively nurturing them in their growth in Christ. Observing the visitation taking place in the two churches and seeing participants gaining experience and satisfaction in assuming a pastoral role, it is clear that members are being better cared for than they were before the seminars began. The fact that members have been contacted and that concern has been expressed for a significant percentage of the membership of both churches indicates that significant good has been accomplished. The pastors have also been aided by the fresh involvement of lay leaders in providing care and leadership. These churches and pastors will benefit even further in the future if the lay leaders are encouraged to stay active and are given additional training and experience.

It is hoped that the successful implementation of this project will cause other churches to develop and activate their own lay resources. While not enough time has passed to determine the full

impact of the program on other churches, signs are apparent that it could be significant. Several pastors of area churches have already made requests for lay training programs in their churches. These pastors heard about the program from members and pastors in the Wheaton and Damascus churches. Two conference presidents have indicated their interest in having the program presented to their full-time workers. The need is felt among pastors and administrators for help in training laymen. It appears that there is a tremendous demand for training programs such as this, and that individuals interested in this work could be kept very busy. I plan to continue to offer these training programs in the future in an attempt to further make a contribution to local congregations and to help meet the demand.

It is also hoped that this project will contribute toward making Columbia Union College a resource center for the churches in the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Programs like the ones carried out at Wheaton and Damascus could be offered to the members and pastors of the Union as a service to the college's constituency. As a result, rapport between the college and its constituency can be further enhanced.

My experience in lay training will directly benefit the ministerial training program for Columbia Union College. Since the practical training of ministerial students is my responsibility, I have found opportunity to share insights and strengthen the role of future pastors as lay trainers.

Another expectation that has been realized, has to do with

my own development. This project has given me new insights and sharpened skills in the matter of lay training. My experience in both developing the theoretical principles that formed a base for the seminars and in conducting the field exercises has been a tremendous personal enrichment.

It is hoped that this attempt to work with lay pastors will be a springboard to motivate others to take up the task of developing lay training programs for the enhancement of other spiritual gifts. Many laymen are wistfully waiting to be better equipped for some form of ministry for which the Lord has gifted them. The church desperately needs motivated individuals who sense the fullest possibilities of training laymen for various ministries. If even one church leader would be encouraged to conduct his/her own training program by reading this report, it would be both gratifying, and a further fulfillment of expectations for the project.

As I look into the immediate future I set new personal objectives, the attainment of which will keep me growing as a lay trainer. They are as follows:

1. Further refinement and implementation of the seminars on personal evangelism and lay preaching
2. Fulfillment of requests to conduct either of the three developed seminars in area churches
3. Conducting an annual seminar on personal evangelism for lay college students who are outside the ministerial training program
4. Presentation of witnessing seminars for laymen of specific area churches in connection with evangelistic meetings which I

plan to conduct in the future

5. Keeping abreast of new training approaches and programs through the reading of published literature and attending lay-training workshops.

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ELEMENTS THAT APPEAR TO CONTRIBUTE TO
SUCCESSFUL LAY TRAINING

As synthesized from the models offered by:

1. The Pennsylvania Conference of S.D.A.s
2. Robert Schuller
3. James Garlow

1. Thorough organization of the training program in terms of scheduling, teaching materials, and oral instruction in both field and classroom phases

2. Expectations and procedures that are clear to both trainers and trainees at each step of the way

3. Flexibility in the scheduling of the training program and on-going field work

4. A substantial period of time devoted to the absorption of theory and the development of practical skill relative to each category of training, involving a minimum of two or three months, and frequently more extensive periods of time

5. A clear description of the role or function for which training is being offered, along with training that is specifically geared toward the development of those skills required to fulfill that role or function

6. A felt need existing within the church for the services of capable laymen

7. Education of participating laymen, pastors, and church members regarding the Biblical basis and purpose of lay ministry

8. Recruitment strategy that includes an effective screening process which identifies and motivates trainers and trainees who are committed, and reasonably gifted for the chosen tasks

9. Some form of remuneration whether financial or in terms of recognition and/or satisfaction, supporting a sense of achievement and selfworth

10. Healthy balance between classroom lecture/discussion and guided field practice

11. A significant amount of in-service modelling on the part of trainers

12. Supervision that goes beyond the training phase and implies constructive feedback and evaluation in the context of systematic contact between supervisors and trainees

13. An on-going system of accountability for trainees which includes the process of giving oral and/or written reports on field experiences

14. Development of "team spirit" between the trainers and trainees

15. Opportunity for task-oriented small group settings to provide fellowship and support during the training, and on-going stages of the program

16. Some financing to cover expenses of the training program

17. Provision for a trainee to terminate his/her services, after a reasonable time of service, and to intersperse periods of "rest" between periods of "service"

18. Manageable responsibilities
19. Good communication between trainers and trainees
20. Strong administrative and pastoral support.

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